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SIR STANLEY MAUDE AND OTHER MEMORIES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

LORD WILLIAM BERESFORD

ETC. ETC.

GENERAL SIR STANLEY MAUDE IN MESOPOTAMIA WEARING HIS BELOVED NORWEGIAN BOOTS

SIR STANLEY MAUDE AND OTHER MEMORIES

BY

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YORK STREET, ST. JAMES'S
LONDON, S.W. 1 ⁂ MCMXX

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

General Sir Stanley Maude—His personality—School days—Contemporaries at Eton—With the Coldstream Guards in the Soudan—Wounded in South Africa—Military Secretary to the Governor-General of Canada—Appointed Secretary to Secretary of State for War—On General Staff at War Office—Out to France—From Colonel to Brigadier-General—Twenty Generals under a cloud—General Maude wounded—His experiences in Gallipoli—Lost during the evacuation—Found in time—His views of the evacuation—Other Generals' views—Sir William Robertson's appreciation of "Joe Maude"—General Maude in Egypt and Mesopotamia—Difficulties to be faced—Inadequate transport—Spring floods—Supposed responsibility of Sir Beauchamp Duff—His temperament—Banquets for Sir Beauchamp 3

CHAPTER II

Some successes and triumphs—Sir George Younghusband's appreciation of a "Soldier and Gentleman"—The disappointment of Hannah—Sannaiyat's bloody battles—And some heroic souls—Two posthumous V.C.'s—General Townshend's address to the troops—An heroic attempt abandoned—General Maude's working day—His staff's despair—The fat boy A.D.C.—Comes to grief—Well-trained orderlies—General Marshall's request—General Maude's reply—Medical authorities at fault—Torture of the wounded—Concealing a failure—General Maude knighted—The cause of his death—A beautiful religion—The future of Mesopotamia—His plans for ex-soldiers—Germany's famous railway—Suggested memorials—Wealthy merchant's handsome offer—Sir Stanley Maude's last despatch—His athletic achievements—A modest letter—A gentle conqueror's will—Memorial service in St. Paul's Cathedral 21

CHAPTER III

A tragedy in the hills—My ayah is communicative—A lonely invalid—A lady without a name—An embarrassing situation—Red tape amongst the doctors—The chaplain finds it very awkward—A bundle of flannel—A pitiful letter—Last words—Two English pennies—Author interviews a stranger—The reason of it all—

PAGE

Happenings of political importance—The Afghan Boundary Commission—Future possibilities—Railway lines of consequence —A prophecy fulfilled—German intrigues in Afghanistan—Uninterned Germans—A German mission to Afghanistan—An awkward moment for the Amir—Electric light at Kabul—Lord Kitchener and the Amir's cars—Beware of German missionaries—Germany's interest in Persia—Why the commission was necessary—Sir Donald Stewart gives his orders—Searching for water—Members of the Commission—An inconvenient route—The Amir perturbed—Some pig-sticking—The British meet with a rebuff—A jumping-off ground for Russia—Colonel Ridgeway at Panjdeh—An agreement broken—The Russians under General Komaroff—"A regrettable incident"—Sir Peter Lumsden's mistaken policy—The Commission feels small 56

CHAPTER IV

An Eastern statesman—He saves the situation—A scare in London—Overtaken by a snowstorm—Sir Peter Lumsden declines to halt—Another regrettable incident—Sir Peter recalled—Colonel Ridgeway knighted—A protocol signed—Differences of opinion —A bitter winter—Cossacks' complaints—The British feed them—"Those damned Russians"—The British position as viewed by Russia—Future relations between Russia and Great Britain—Dangerous conversations—Our fleet "can do no harm"—A little "show off"—Fresh difficulties—The 1873 Agreement at fault—The Commission returns—Sir West Ridgeway at St. Petersburg—As a young man—His career—And appointments—What the tea planters say—Lady Ridgeway, her love of home—Some soup tickets—The King and Queen in Ceylon—A hospital to Lady Ridgeway's memory—Lord Londonderry (sixth Marquess) in Ireland—A beautiful Vicereine —Mr. Balfour makes a lifelong friend—A contretemps at Court—An air-raid on the East Coast—Lady Castlereagh rescues a wounded animal—Lady Londonderry's death—The Londonderry estates—Some famous relics—The founding of their industrial wealth—Queen Victoria suppresses a scandal . . 85

CHAPTER V

The Russians at home—Surprising customs—Bathroom scenes—And etiquettes—Fresh air charged for in the bill—A nourishing smell—Ritual during Easter festival—The Tsarevitch cries—His illness—A little known medical fact—Seething discontent —Every Russian an anarchist—Prince Yousupoff at Oxford—His motor-car—Bulldogs and parrots—Fêted in Petrograd —Peter the Great's gold ducats—His reforms wise and unwise —His statue at Petrograd—His so-called will—"The Polish Question"—Bismarck's fear of Polish women—Frederick the Great admires them—Poland's artistic temperament—No middle classes—No half-measures—A loathing of trade . . 111

CHAPTER VI

PAGE

The Russian ballet visits England—Golders Green becomes fashionable—Russian domestics—Shopping difficulties—Madame Pavlova and her company tour in America—Pavlova's simplicity—A trial to her managers—Mordkin works the sewing-machine—Temporary home in a train—Publicity-agents' enterprise—Patience of American audiences—"Gad, what a small stage!"—Pavlova's maids—Their work and affection—Pavlova mends her shoes—Her pet alligator—A prize-fight between Mordkin and Pavlova—The Bishop cleans the boots—Hotels clean and unclean—The alligator in an hotel—Until the bill was paid!—A motor-car in flames—The late Tsar's loves—Some arrests—Corruption grows apace—A baby boycotted—Chocolate and water in a bottle—An interpreter for Russian commissioners—A Russian officer's diplomacy—With the Red Cross in Russia . 130

CHAPTER VII

Red Cross nurses misunderstood—The sanitar's forgetfulness—Hostile aeroplanes visit the Red Cross camps—With the wounded in the dark—A superhuman doctor—Long hours in the operating tent—Patience of the wounded—Disgraceful state of Russian hospitals—Lady Muriel Paget in the doctor's hands—A pre-war Trocadero waiter—Russian orderly's method of obeying orders—English and Russian soldiers fraternise in hospital—The Colonel's orderly deviates from former excellence—A sergeant's curious report—Operations under difficulties—A father's instructions to his wounded son—Two girls influence a regiment—A gruesome sight—Prayer before battle—Russians and their prisoners—England's lost opportunities—Germany steps in—A great Russian scientist—Sour milk a life-prolonger 147

CHAPTER VIII

English nurse's experiences in Russia—Lady Sibyl Grey and a revolver—Lady Muriel Paget's stories—A quaint prayer—Escape of Russian prisoners—An indignant commercial traveller—Washed in vinegar—A chaplain at work in Flanders—An interview—It proved important—How German influence gained a footing in Russia—Baron Meyendorff at Monte Carlo—Presents his cigarette-case to the author—A wander round the Casino—A row between two women—A beautiful woman disappears—Various methods of making money—A young gambler—No programmes issued—A German spy—Author introduced to him—He is shot—Count von Hochberg at Dunster—He builds a hunting-box—But does not hunt—Orders his valet to "blow up the place"—A rumour—Strange discoveries—An exciting mothers' meeting—Some people are libelled—Lawyer's letters—The Crown Prince in Jermyn Street—"Mickie" and "Willie" have merry times—What of Prince Henry of Pless?—And Prince Kinsky?—Baron von Eckhardstein—Misses the

PAGE

chance of his life—Concerning the Anglo-Japanese Alliance—King Edward sends an urgent telegram—Count von Bülow and the Kaiser—Their views of British Ministers—Mr. Alfred Rothschild speaks up—So does the King—Absurd secrecy—Crown Prince's visits to the "Billie Carlton" opium den—Count von Heltzendorff searches for him—A horrible discovery—A solitude *à deux* disturbed—The Crown Prince gets a thrashing 161

CHAPTER IX

Lord and Lady E—— in search of peace—In difficulties—The butler offers to lend them money—Flight to flat-land—Full of hope, doubt, despair—Some scourges—The way to live in flats—Some scenes—Tea in a Hen Club—Flight from flat-land—Yorkshire once more—An original character out hunting—The author feels small—A surprise at tea-time—Our country manners—The sportswoman lights her pipe—We meet in church—Impressions left on the mind 183

CHAPTER X

Mr. Lloyd George—Is he a conundrum?—What the Quakers think—The Prime Minister's early environment—The cobbler uncle—The lawyer defends the lawless—Lloyd George in a fury—The temperaments of North and South Wales—Forming a character—An annoying smile—Repartee of yesterday and to-day—Sir John Gibson of Aberystwyth—Suffragettes complain of rough handling—The Welsh people offended—Lawyers in the House of Commons—Lloyd George's first Budget—Democratic royalties—Lloyd George makes a mistake—Lord Selborne has something to say—Some inaccuracies—Lord Northcliffe and Lloyd George—Mr. Labouchere's cynicism—Count Hayashi defines a diplomatist—A diplomatist teaches his wife—Harsh words—A meeting at Harrods—A political understudy—A wife's diplomacy—She hates it—Introduction of a foreign prince—Colonel Cato's financial stress—The prince to the rescue—Oriental cunning—An official rumpus—A big cheque—Obliging bank manager—An enquiry—A friend in need—A horrible day—Prevarications—The prince plays up—His Highness offended—Good-bye 205

CHAPTER XI

Dora Dennis's childhood—Her God-fearing parents—She runs away—Where she was found—The Vicar mounts the stable ladder—Breathless moments—An awful fall—Mr. Dennis anticipates lock-jaw—The cook anticipates cancer—The doctor called in—Dora leaves home—She becomes a hospital nurse—Is sent to nurse a sick clergyman—Homesick—Forgetful old Moses—The patient asks a question—Dora's reply—Mr. Dennis dies—His will—What happened to Dora in the fog . 238

CHAPTER XII

PAGE

Some snobs—Blue-blooded ones—Otherwise—A commercial papa scores—Are we all mad?—Might-have-been days—Some pet economies—A noble lord's "shoot"—A host speaks his mind—Di Barringtown's love—Her indiscretions—A little lecture—An annoyed wife—A snub from Ascot—More home truths—A miserable explanation—A curious divorce—The butler gives notice—A sanctimonious prig—A heartless mother—Mr. Justice Butt looks bored—Eloquent Counsel—Defendant falls out with the judge—Counsel insulted—The judge makes a suggestion—Both parties agree—Off to Paris 257

CHAPTER XIII

Stories from the war zone—Bully-beef tin villages—German food rationing upset—Mr. Lloyd George and a General—Field-Marshal Lord Methuen—His popularity—His interest in the sick—Kindness to the nurses—The King and Queen pay a surprise visit—What happened—An angry but playful doctor—Lord Methuen and the soldiers' canteens—Some scandals—Lord Leverhulme and Sir Richard Burbidge make enquiries—The military authorities upset—General Sir Julian Byng—His new words of command—A dream realised—From charging cavalry to charging tanks—Etonians in the war—A human document—From a dead man's pocket—A Mrs. V.C.—The squire at a concert—A contretemps—Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Mr. Justice Grantham—They write verses—Some fellow-travellers . 281

ILLUSTRATIONS

General Sir Stanley Maude in Mesopotamia Wearing his Beloved Norwegian Boots . . . . . *Frontispiece*

Camp on the Tigris . . . . . *Facing page* 14

General Sir George Younghusband leaving a Hospital Ship . . . . . „ 22

Donkeys Standing in the Smoke of a Burning Refuse Heap in Hopes of Driving the Flies Away . „ 30

Sir Stanley Maude's Entry into Baghdad . . „ 48

The Right Hon. Sir J. West Ridgeway when Under-Secretary for Ireland . . . . . „ 102

Lady West Ridgeway . . . . . „ 104

The Late Theresa, Marchioness of Londonderry, in her Coronation Robes . . . . . „ 106

The Late Lord Londonderry, 6th Marquess . . „ 108

Madame Pavlova and Monsieur Mordkin . . . „ 136
(*From a picture by Michael Jacobs.*)

Count von Hochberg, whose Coat of Arms has now been Removed from his Seat in Old Cleeve Church and his Estate Sequestered by the Government . . . . . „ 174

Prince Charles Kinsky . . . . . „ 176

Field-Marshal Lord Methuen . . . . . „ 286

Some Notable Men in the 10th Hussars . . . „ 288

General the Hon. Sir Julian Byng To-day . . „ 288

Captain Claude de Crespigny, 2nd Life Guards. Recommended for the V.C. . . . . „ 292

SIR STANLEY MAUDE AND OTHER MEMORIES

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CHAPTER I

General Sir Stanley Maude—His personality—School days—Contemporaries at Eton—With the Coldstream Guards in the Soudan—Wounded in South Africa—Military Secretary to the Governor-General of Canada—Appointed Secretary to Secretary of State for War—On General Staff at War Office—Out to France—From Colonel to Brigadier-General—Twenty Generals under a cloud—General Maude wounded—His experiences in Gallipoli—Lost during the evacuation—Found in time—His views of the evacuation—Other Generals' views—Sir William Robertson's appreciation of "Joe Maude"—General Maude in Egypt and Mesopotamia—Difficulties to be faced—Inadequate transport—Spring floods—Supposed responsibility of Sir Beauchamp Duff—His temperament—Banquets for Sir Beauchamp.

MEMORY has a way of leading one into all sorts of places, amongst all sorts of people and things, and if allowed to have its own way, which is really best for it, is inclined to make one appear erratic—but what matter ?

The study of human nature is of absorbing interest, we come unexpectedly upon so much goodness, so much pluck, and yet, occasionally, so much selfishness, but upon very few occasions human beings who are not interesting.

We used to spend our lives waiting for the next post, all of us, children, grown-ups, aged, all waiting for the next post, when suddenly a thousand posts were heaped upon us with a crash, and ever since events have been treading on one another's heels with such rapidity that we have not had time to study all that great post brought for us ; and some of the human documents may easily be forgotten as each

day brings us fresh excitements, fresh griefs and tragedies, fresh joys and thanksgivings.

Hardly a day has passed during this European War but some brave man has died an heroic death. Many glorious and wondrous deeds have been done which will never be heard of by the public, deeds that lie buried under the mantle of their own virtue. Owing to the rush of great events I have fears that the memory of that brilliant soldier General Sir Stanley Maude may be crowded out. Had he lived he would have been one of the returning heroes welcomed with brass bands, Royal thanks, and public honours.

Most people know of his military achievements, but there are, I find, very many who know little or nothing of his personality which was striking, or the real cause of his death. Therefore " lest we forget " I am writing a little of what I know of a remarkably unselfish, self-reliant, straightforward man.

It is curious that while undoubtedly a born soldier, during the early part of his life soldiering held no special attraction for him ; what he loved was racing and sport, and he dearly loved a gamble. At no time in his life was he a rich man ; nevertheless he raced and spent money ; then suddenly for some reason best known to himself he began to take life seriously.

His early education at the age of eleven was begun at Hawtrey's Preparatory School at Slough in 1875, and continued at Eton in Mr. F. W. Cornish's house. When eighteen and a bit, he went to Sandhurst. Amongst other cadets there at the same time who became his life-long friends and whose names have become familiar to us were General Kavanagh, D.S.O. ; General the Hon. William Lambton, D.S.O. ; and General Levita, lately commanding the depôt of the Eastern Command.

Although fond of athletics and sport, Maude evidently did not allow them to interfere with his work, for, in addition to carrying away with him a good record for running and riding, his reports showed high marks for his examinations in military administration, military law, tactics and

fortifications, though highest of all in military topography and reconnaissance, while his conduct was described as " exemplary."

Leaving the Royal Military College in 1884, he was appointed to the Coldstream Guards. At this time he stood six foot three inches, was well set up and handsome. He shared with the majority of those who are popular, the privilege of having a nickname, his baptismal name being Frederick he was best known amongst his many friends as " Joe Maude."

His first active service was in the Soudan in 1885 while a subaltern in the Coldstream Guards, being present at the Battle of Hasheen and Tamai, for which he received the medal and Khedive's Star. Then came the South African War in which he took an active part from 1889 to 1901, being present in the advance on Kimberley and the actions of Poplar Grove, Driefontien, Karee Siding, Vet River and Zand River, the operations in the Transvaal, actions in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Diamond Hill and Belfast. He was several times mentioned in despatches and received the Queen's Medal with six clasps and the D.S.O.

During these South African experiences he was wounded in his right arm, which remained stiff for the rest of his life, and prevented him from raising it high enough to salute in the regular and orthodox manner. A fall while skating in Canada added to its original South African stiffness.

In 1901 Maude had become a Lieutenant-Colonel and went out to Canada to succeed General Lawrence Drummond as Military Secretary to Lord Minto, who was Governor-General at that time. Lady Minto speaks of Stanley Maude as a hard-working and most efficient Military Secretary.

His work was no sinecure, for the entire arrangements both inside and out of Government House passed through his hands with the assistance of an under-secretary named Arthur Sladen, who is, or was a short time ago, still out there at Government House, Ottawa.

Stanley Maude, who was the younger son of the late General Sir F. Maude, V.C., married in 1893 one of the

handsome daughters of Colonel Taylor of Ardgillan Castle, Co. Dublin, and she accompanied him to Canada, where they lived at the official residence of the secretary known by the name of " Rideon Cottage," if my memory serves me faithfully.

Considering that Maude was not a conversationalist, and did not enjoy social functions, it is rather surprising that he was a success as Military Secretary. Perhaps his very charming manners and his tact which was born of sympathy made up for his non-appreciation of the many social functions.

That he worked very hard there is no doubt. By the evening he was often quite exhausted. Of necessity he was the busiest man on the staff, and I have been told by others who were there at the time, that he never failed in a single duty, even when he had all the arranging of the tour of our present King and Queen. These tours are a great tax upon the Military Secretary's capabilities. The ordinary Governor-General's is quite trying enough with its endless fixtures to be crammed into each day ; quite possibly about fifteen addresses have to be received, a convent visited, or a hospital ; a mayor's luncheon, followed by a reception, and then more visits to a blind institution or some such charity, all in one day.

The Military Secretary's business is to see there are no hitches, no delay, and that everybody is pleased and in a good temper, and above all that His Excellency should be safe, and likewise, if possible, in a good temper.

The Controller who was under the Military Secretary attended to details such as menus, etc., but for the rest Maude was entirely responsible. The whole of his time and all his thoughts were given to his work. He attended no parties for pleasure, not even skating and ski-ing, and was at all times very Spartan, could not even be persuaded to wear an overcoat until the thermometer was below zero ! He remained in Canada with the Mintos until 1904, then came home and was appointed private secretary to the Secretary of State for War.

When the European War broke out he was on the General Staff at the War Office, with thirty years' service, still a Colonel and meditating retiring, but the war changed all that, and he rapidly came to the front, his rather exceptional capabilities being quickly recognised. Why he had never come to the front before it is hard to tell, for he was a painstaking and brilliant soldier, which all allow who knew him and his work.

Most of his time hitherto had been spent as a staff officer and as Military Secretary. Now he devoted all his energies in helping to create the New Army. An old brother officer of his in the Guards (he is now a General) tells me Maude's patience and kindliness while educating a number of officers quite new to the work, and who notwithstanding were at times somewhat self-opinionated, were exemplary. He took such infinite pains, going into the smallest details with them, explaining all the whys and wherefores. Many tributes have since been paid by those officers whom he trained, to their instructor's brilliant qualities as a teacher, and I have been told the success that has been attained in France by the division Maude trained is considered due largely to the way he grounded the officers in their work.

Maude went out to France when the third corps was formed under General Pultenay. A little later the 8th Division under General Davies was ordered out and sent to relieve some troops at Laventie. Here he found his friend Maude of Eton and Coldstream Guards days commanding a Brigade. It was a pleasant meeting and rather a surprise to find Colonel Maude grown into a Brigadier-General.

I have known several men holding quite junior rank, majors and so forth, when war broke out, who had for some years been doing no soldiering and entirely out of touch with all modern scientific warfare methods, suddenly turned into full-blown Brigadier-Generals and expected to manœuvre and handle their troops after the latest approved fashion. Of course the poor souls did their best, and while preening themselves on their new exalted rank, suddenly received marching orders for home as not being competent.

It seems rather hard lines, for what else could be expected? I know one little batch of twenty generals came home under a cloud, more or less, for I happen to know several of them; a few of the more fortunate being promised other posts more suitable!

During General Maude's active service in France he was badly wounded and mentioned in despatches five times.

I have heard people say, "Oh, but he was a Guardsman, they always do things for *them*, and give them well-paid and easy jobs." On second thoughts I think they were called "soft jobs."

I do not think anybody can truly say Stanley Maude had any soft jobs during the Great War, either in France, Gallipoli or Mesopotamia, and he certainly proved he was worthy of all he received in acknowledgment, and a great deal more besides, which would no doubt have followed if he had been fortunate enough to reach home without any little throwback or side slip, which has been the fate within my remembrance of some fine soldiers when all their early heroism has been quickly forgotten and only the side slip remembered.

Gallipoli came next in Stanley Maude's experiences. He was at Suvla most of the time. After the evacuation of that place, he took his Division to Mudros and from there to Cape Helles, where he was severely handled in an attack by the enemy on January 7th, the day before the final evacuation of Cape Helles.

This attack was repulsed with great loss to the enemy, but was also costly to us.

There are various stories told of General Maude at this time, one being that when orders were given to evacuate Cape Helles, and it became known that the Gallipoli Campaign was a thing to be wiped off the slate and if possible buried and forgotten, General Maude could not at first believe it, the idea of evacuation being most painful to him, and there were some, who did not know his stern sense of duty and his love of strict soldierly discipline, who feared he might "queer the whole evacuation at the last moment by starting an attack on the Turks all on his own," for they

knew how firmly he believed, in fact never doubted for a moment, that with proper reinforcements and munitions they could have taken Constantinople. In consequence of this, the consternation was great when the last moment had arrived that all should be on board, and no General Maude put in an appearance, considerable anxiety was also felt for his safety.

What had really happened was this. The Staff of his Division was ordered originally to embark at a place called Gully Beach, about two miles from the place of embarkation. At the time the last troops were leaving, the wind had risen and a heavy sea was running. The lighter on which Maude had embarked got out of control and ran ashore, where, as far as I know, it still remains. The troops had to disembark and march down to the main place of embarkation. Maude thought he would do a short cut on his own account, only to find himself hung up amongst barbed wire defences, which had been arranged to protect the beach, and he ran a very good chance of being left behind altogether. The embarkation of the last troops of all had to be delayed until he was found.

If the Turks had only known what the future had in store for him, they would not have lost their opportunity.

As a matter of fact the Turks never moved until next morning, and I have heard various reasons assigned for their tranquillity, one being they knew perfectly well our troops were stealing away and, at the very time of our supposed secret movements, they were busy printing leaflets to scatter amongst the native troops telling them they were being deserted by their white friends who were leaving them to have their throats cut.

But I must return to General Maude who was still absent and causing much uneasiness as to his fate. The story goes that he eventually turned up dragging his kit-bag, which was full of trophies and which nothing would make him leave behind, so at the risk of his life he stuck to it, having protracted struggles amidst barbed wire, etc.

The long wait whilst Maude was struggling with barbed

wire caused a person holding a high position now at the front to write the following poem, shall I call it ?—that has been given to me.

" Found at Helles on January 9th.

Come into the lighter, Maude,
For the fuse has long been lit,
Come into the lighter, Maude,
And never mind your kit.

I've waited here an hour or more,
The news that your march is o'er.
The sea runs high, but what care I,
It's better to be sick than blown sky high.

So jump into the lighter, Maude,
The allotted time is flown,
Come into the lighter, Maude,
I'm off in the launch alone,
I'm off in the launch a-lone.

LORENZO.

Generals holding responsible positions in these times are not to be envied. They seem to be used chiefly as buffers for the political string-pullers to hide behind, when anything goes wrong with the civilian controlled campaign. If the truth is ever allowed to be known of the Dardanelles Campaign from start to finish I think it will put a few more nails into the coffin of civilian controlled campaigns, but perhaps it would make no difference. I can remember no case in history where civilians meddling with the soldiers has been a success, but still it goes on ; perhaps it always will.

I happen to know the views held by the late Sir Stanley Maude on the Gallipoli fiasco, and his judgment and ability, so self-evident later in Mesopotamia, gives weight to his opinions.

He was violently opposed to the evacuation idea, as I have already stated. But we all know now that the authorities at home thought otherwise, for a new plan had dawned upon them, its name was Loos !

It became a question of taking Constantinople or Loos—they choose Loos !

I have heard the Gallipoli campaign discussed frequently by people who evidently knew little about it except from hearsay. I am, therefore, tempted to digress a little and let in some light on the subject, which I received direct from a great friend of mine who held a big command out there and was through the occupation and evacuation.

I asked my friend to explain some points that had perplexed me. Amongst other things I wished to know if he could tell me what was the real meaning of that much-quoted epithet " Unthinkable " which appeared in one of Sir Ian Hamilton's despatches in reference to the question of evacuation. In reply I was told, " Only Sir Ian himself can say in what sense he used that word ; but it seems fairly clear that he must have meant something more than the mere physical difficulty of such an enterprise, seeing he had himself evacuated a couple of divisions with complete success. Lord Kitchener to whom the Despatch was addressed must have understood the reference, otherwise he would have had it cut out.

" I myself have very little doubt that the word was a reminder by Sir Ian to Lord Kitchener of the repeated pledges made to him by his old Chief and the Government, that once he had started fighting there was to be no turning our backs on Gallipoli."

I know also that Lord Kitchener's views on this point have not been quite correctly placed before the public, any more than have his views concerning the intelligence and ability of his colleagues.

General Maude said, " It [speaking of the evacuation] came as a bomb-shell to us all. In September we were told we were to have the reinforcements that were needed, consisting of four French Divisions, under ——, and two Divisions of fresh British troops which, in the opinion of every officer who carried any weight, was ample to enable us to push through, but that miserable Loos spoilt everything."

Another friend who was at that time holding a responsible post out there, after telling me of Maude's disappointment

at the turn of events and of his soldierly qualities, said, " And I was in entire sympathy with him. The upshot of the whole affair is to my mind certain, namely, the expedition failed through the timidity and divided counsels of the higher direction at home who changed their minds between Loos and Constantinople *twice in one month !* "

" We in Gallipoli never had anything like our fair share of guns and high explosives given at that time to the French front, then came that fatal error the Salonika diversion, and General Hamilton had to evacuate two of his divisions to Salonika, while no reinforcements were sent to fill our depleted regiments. During most of the fighting and at the end we were only half our nominal strength, and there in Salonika between the mountains and the sea those troops remain—a regular eel trap."

This was the last straw, but the camels whose backs will be broken are not the soldiers' but the poor old things with the hump called " wait and see."

The same friend who was a great admirer of both Stanley Maude and Sir Ian Hamilton at another time said, " By the way no kudos whatever fell to Hamilton's share though he evacuated the French and Irish divisions without losing a man, gun, or horse."

There is a desperate amount of luck attending all great military manœuvres. A success in the morning, and the General Commanding is a wondrous genius ; a throw-back in the evening, and he is useless and incompetent.

Such is life !

General Maude had a great admiration for Sir William Robertson and Sir Douglas Haig. He was always holding them up to his staff as examples. The former I know was likewise an admirer of General Maude, for in a letter to me soon after the bad news reached England he wrote, " Joe Maude was universally admired both for his soldierly qualities and stirling, upright character. He was a staff officer of the best type, while as a commander he possessed the great quality of inspiring his men with his own confidence and determination. His achievements in his last campaign

were of the highest order and speak for themselves. His army were devoted to him and he was a man whom Ireland and the Empire as a whole could ill afford to lose. The example he invariably set of patriotism, unselfishness, loyalty and modesty cannot but have exercised great influence for good upon all those who were brought into contact with him."

All who knew and cared for General Maude will value this appreciation of Sir William Robertson at its true worth, for he is a very fine man, embodying those qualities which Englishmen used to think were their own. Strong in character, a man of few words, essentially straightforward and loyal; anyone dealing with him has the advantage of knowing exactly where he is. How he came to accept the Eastern Command is a mystery, but I strongly suspect his motives were purely patriotic, his taking up this smaller appointment undoubtedly, for the moment, saved Lord Derby, as well as Mr. Lloyd George and his Government.

Sir Harry Wilson who succeeded General Robertson is another type entirely; quick, fluent, adroit, and not so popular with the soldiers. Professionally and intellectually he is well equipped for carrying on his present duties, but the politicians will find that they are children at their own game compared with Harry Wilson.

Various questions remain unanswered in my mind in connection with the many scrapped generals at this time.

We all know now, for time has proved it, that General Robertson was right on all the points on which he did not agree with the higher authorities. Lord Derby has now taken Lord Berties place as Ambassador in Paris and I am reminded of one of Mr. A. J. Balfour's cryptic sayings, that because a man is a failure in one office it does not follow that he will be in another; the equally cryptic saying of another parliamentarian naturally follows, we must " wait and see."

We must now follow General Maude to Egypt; from there he moved to Basra with his division in February or March, 1916. It was after the failure to relieve Kut in

January and he was told to push up with all speed in detachments *as soon as shipping became available.*

The position at the front which General Maude had to face was one of considerable difficulty, the troops under General Aylmer had failed to reach Kut, the river transport was deplorable, ships which had been collected in Indian ports had been unable to leave them owing to stormy weather, others which actually started had met with storms and been sunk *en route.* The land transport was entirely inadequate and not only confined operations to the immediate vicinity of the river, but during any advance even along the river itself had to be supplemented by further drains on the river transport.

It can easily be understood how the deficiency of transport affected the situation up the Tigris, where local supplies were practically non-existent ; everything had to be brought up from the base at Basra, even fodder for the animals and fuel for cooking. The transport trouble handicapped all movements, and was one of the chief causes of anxiety, it being possible only to convey reinforcements up the river at the expense of supplies and vice versa, the result being, that during the operations for the relief of Kut from January to April, although a bare minimum of supplies was maintained at the front, reinforcements often amounting to 25 per cent of the entire force were continuously held up at the base or the lines of communication for lack of transport.

Another anxiety at this time was the spring floods, during which nothing but continual construction and endless repairs of the embankment along the river banks could prevent extensive inundations, or protect the camping grounds of the troops from being flooded out.

These are only a few of the difficulties the situation presented when on April 1st General Maude moved up the left bank of the Tigris to take part in active operations, which, however, were delayed by heavy rains making the country impassable.

To those who know nothing of the climate of Mesopotamia I would like to point out two most important things

CAMP ON THE TIGRIS

to bear in mind while viewing the work before Stanley Maude, namely, the climate, and the navigation peculiar to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

The name Mesopotamia means between two rivers. I think General Maude must have felt he was between " the devil and the deep sea."

The heat may be gauged by the fact that a double fly tent is inadequate to protect Europeans from sunstroke. Steamers of special and peculiar type are necessary to combat the eccentricities of the river navigation.

General Maude said that " much expenditure as well as experienced forethought was necessary in such a treacherous climate and under such transport difficulties, if the troops were to have a chance of keeping their health, a mass of equipment, necessaries, comforts and medical supplies were necessary, ice, ventilating fans, quinine, double tents, sun helmets and thousands of other such things, none of which were forthcoming."

This was partly owing to a drastic scheme of retrenchment in India, where it had been decided that the Indian Army need never contemplate any military trouble with an army of a European power.

Everything was cut down to the lowest fraction, guns to an almost negligible quantity, and of big guns, if I may believe what I am told, there were none, while the troops available for immediate mobilisation were cut down from nine to seven divisions; therefore, after all Lord Kitchener's and Lord Roberts' endeavours, the Indian Army was in a worse position than during the South African war.

This was bad enough, but what worried General Maude even more was the scandal of the medical and hospital arrangements.

He had to re-arrange as far as was possible the entire situation. He deplored the system that has sprung up of late years of official telegrams being marked " private," and in consequence treated as the private and confidential property of the recipient, and not filed in the Military Department in the old-fashioned way. The result

of this departure from the usual military highways was that a number of officials were quite unaware of what it was essential they should know. For instance, in consequence of this secrecy, Sir John Nixon in Mesopotamia was not aware that information had been received that about 60,000 Turkish troops were believed to be massing near Baghdad. Had this information reached him, it might have entirely changed the course of what proved a disastrous affair.

This system of secrecy was approved by the Secretary of State for India, who considered it wise, so as to prevent items of importance becoming known in quarters where it would not be desirable.

Some Members of Council in India have solemnly declared that they were never even consulted as to the Mesopotamian Campaign, but there is some difficulty in tracing all the happenings and telegrams, as it is the habit of the Secretary of State and Governor-General to take away with them at the end of their tenure of office all these secret telegrams; consequently there is no public record for reference at any later date.

The Commission when enquiring into these mistakes of the campaign stated that "a number of these telegrams of the gravest consequence relating to the overseas expeditions were with one exception marked private." Therefore a number of people were unaware of what was taking place and what had to be prepared for. Confusion and great loss of life was the result. For how could there be any unity of action?

General Sir Douglas Haig (whom General Maude was always quoting), when chief of the staff in India in 1911, ventured to point out to the authorities that the Indian Military Establishment might have to supply an expeditionary force to meet a European Army, having in his mind the chance of war with Turkey and quite possibly supported by Germany. The authorities were not impressed.

After Agadir, where I had a friend who gave me thrilling descriptions, the possibility of war with Germany was con-

sidered of sufficient importance to necessitate preparations in England of both Army and Navy, but in India no steps were taken to see what she could do to help, until late in 1913 and early in 1914.

Considering how the want of transport, medical necessities, big guns, and ammunition hampered General Maude when he took over the supreme command, it struck me as just and generous of him to make excuses (as he did) for those responsible. We all know how in January, 1916, just before General Maude succeeded Sir Percy Lake, the officers responsible for the transport in Mesopotamia became so worried at the difficulties that beset them, preventing a supply of transport for the relief of Kut, that in consultation with General Money, chief of the General Staff, a telegram was sent to Simla stating that, owing to lack of transport, all idea of the relief of Kut would have to be abandoned.

I believe the transport authorities worded the telegram explaining the situation as " so frightfully serious," showing clearly that somebody was frightened out of the usual orthodox red-tape expressions.

The reply received was to the effect that if General Cooper, Assistant Adjutant-General and C.M.G., sent any more " petulant demands for shipping I shall at once remove him from the force and refuse him further employment of any kind."

Poor Sir Beauchamp Duff is supposed to have been responsible for this wire, and we all remember how the worry of the whole affair upset his health—and the tragic sequel. The more tragic, inasmuch, that there never lived a more cautious, scrupulous, and reticent man than Sir Beauchamp Duff. But for that, not a little of the blame laid upon his shoulders might have found its home elsewhere. This was thoroughly understood, all knew they were quite safe; Duff would not speak. But so keenly did he feel being deprived of his command that he was busy preparing his defence with the help of a learned King's Counsel at the time of his death, when an overdose of a sleeping draught put an end to his bitter reflections.

I once asked one of Sir Beauchamp's A.D.C.'s if he thought his chief would give me some information I wanted of a very ordinary kind concerning a post that had been offered to a relation of mine. The reply I received was, " I should certainly ask his advice and of course he *can* help you, but you will be a very clever woman if you can get anything out of him, he is the most absurdly cautious man I know."

It so happened that I did not get the information I wanted, which was of a very ordinary and non-committal kind, but the amount of hedging around the information was most " canny." I verily believe that if I had said to him, " It is very mild for the time of the year," or " There is a great scarcity of small birds this year," he would after some deep thought have said, " That may be so, but you must not take my word for it."

Perhaps his very caution led to the disasters of which the Commission blamed him and asked him to prepare his defence. Several others were asked at the same time to " give their reasons in writing," as the lawyers say, but they did not perhaps take it so much to heart. There are some men who can eat a good dinner, and sleep the sleep of the just, no matter what the day's worries have been ; others cannot, and Sir Beauchamp was one of the latter.

He had been chief of Lord Kitchener's Staff in India and it was on the latter's recommendation that he was made Commander-in-Chief ; and I think he had found, as did Lord Kitchener when he was made Secretary of State for War, that while he imagined he was well versed in the ways of diplomatists and politicians, he had still much to learn of their methods.

Lord Kitchener was for him quite communicative on this subject.

Sir Beauchamp Duff was not a superstitious man or he would not have sat down one of thirteen to dinner as he did on his return from India, when Sir Claude de Crespigny gave him a welcome home at the Caledonian Club, the very building where Sir Beauchamp died a short time afterwards.

Another guest that night was Sir Bourchier Wrey. He died suddenly within a couple of months.

In a letter written by a man of very high position at the time of Sir Beauchamp's trouble he told Sir Claude, " I do not blame the man, but the system."

When I remember all the banquets, dinners and congratulations showered on Sir Beauchamp before his departure for India, it makes me sad to think of his disappointment and unhappiness. Sir Claude de Crespigny was one of the friends who gave him a farewell dinner at the Caledonian Club, and amongst Sir Claude's other guests that night were Sir John French, General Allenby, Sir W. Pitcairn Campbell, Sir Francis Lloyd, and Mr. Norman de Crespigny, Sir Claude's son in the Queen's Bays.

The first two have made history, the second two have held high commands and the fifth died as gallant a death as any hero of the war, and by so doing saved his regiment from being enfiladed. I will refer to this again later.

At this farewell dinner, Sir Claude came off rather badly, and he tells me an amusing story of how it happened.

" The wine butler, a capital fellow and old K.D.G., gave me vintage port in a small glass, so I promptly reported him to Allenby who was sitting next to me, and who was then Inspector of Cavalry.

" Allenby looked reprovingly at the butler, but before he could get in a word the butler fired the first shot, with ' Beg pardon, General, but I was in your column in South Africa,' so they got discussing their beastly column and ignoring my legitimate complaint ! In the heat of the discussion Allenby upset my liqueur brandy, so I balanced matters by surreptitiously annexing his." And in such happy banter the evening was spent.

A few days later Sir John French also gave Sir Beauchamp Duff a send-off dinner at Lancaster Gate. Sir Claude de Crespigny was one of the guests. Speaking of this dinner he says, " A better repast was never my luck to partake of, and the wine was superb."

Sir Claude is a loyal and true friend, as I know, and a

grand hater also. Yet so kind-hearted is he, that if the man he respected least, and disliked the most, came to him in any sort of trouble, asking his help, I doubt very much if he would be sent "empty away"; though he might, and probably would, hear some straight speaking as well.

But I must return to General Maude.

Nothing would persuade him to make a move towards Kut until he had set everything more or less straight and in working order. He was at all times full of thought and consideration for the men and recognition of the services of all who helped him.

It was fortunate that General Maude appeared on the scene and with supreme command, before all the pow-wowing and bickering had ended in irreparable harm for the Empire. All was chaos until he picked up the reins.

CHAPTER II

Some successes and triumphs—Sir George Younghusband's appreciation of a " Soldier and Gentleman "—The disappointment of Hannah—Sannaiyat's bloody battles—And some heroic souls—Two posthumous V.C.'s—General Townshend's address to the troops—An heroic attempt abandoned—General Maude's working day—His staff's despair—The fat boy A.D.C.—Comes to grief—Well-trained orderlies—General Marshall's request—General Maude's reply—Medical authorities at fault—Torture of the wounded—Concealing a failure—General Maude knighted—The cause of his death—A beautiful religion—The future of Mesopotamia—His plans for ex-soldiers—Germany's famous railway—Suggested memorials—Wealthy merchant's handsome offer—Sir Stanley Maude's last despatch—His athletic achievements—A modest letter—A gentle conqueror's will—Memorial service in St. Paul's Cathedral.

AT last on the morning of April 5th all was in readiness. General Maude began his appointed task, and the division successfully assaulted the Hannah position, one of great strength, which the Turks had been occupying since January, and which lay between the Suwaikieh Marsh (which extends northward right up to the Persian foot-hills) and the Tigris.

That same night the next position at Falahiyah, three miles west of Hannah, was taken by the Division. Both these successes were great triumphs for General Maude.

General Sir George Younghusband, 7th (Meerut) Division, had been through three very bloody battles endeavouring to take these positions and they had been up against nearly three times their own number of Turks without rest or relief. They had laboriously sapped up to within about a hundred yards of Hannah, and General Maude's Division (the 13th New Army) which was fresh was put in to take it.

Speaking of this time, General Younghusband expresses himself as having been greatly impressed with the admirable

manner in which Maude took over a perfect labyrinth of works measuring no less than fifteen miles of spade-work. Younghusband offered Maude and his staff food and drink, but they would take nothing but a drink of water, a kindly thought, for they knew how hard up the 7th Division was for everything.

The following morning before dawn the 7th Division were up about a thousand yards behind the front line watching Maude's attack. It went through like clockwork, and in half an hour Maude had won a very striking victory.

General Younghusband now received orders to follow Maude's Division, pass through it, and next day to storm a further position some five miles back. This was to take place during the night. About 9 p.m. he found General Maude in a deserted Turkish dug-out in a rather agitated state of mind, complaining that he had got out of touch with his brigade and could not make out what was happening, but wounded men were coming back, saying they were " up against it."

At the appointed time General Younghusband pushed through, only to find the Turks had had enough and had cleared out. A little later after two most heroic efforts had been made against what was practically an unassailable position with the means obtainable, General Maude was again sent up to see if he could repeat the magic of Hannah.

Once more he took over splendidly, and again he attacked with the same careful methods, but this time his star was clouded and his division, like General Younghusband's, was repulsed. This depressed him a good deal, but he cheered up when told by those who had witnessed the whole battle that neither he nor his troops could have done better, and that it was too hard a nut to crack without considerably more of everything than they had, or were able to get. Though a little consoled Maude was woefully disappointed.

It was immediately after the inundations both from river and marsh which not only curtailed the frontage for attack but converted the whole of the country of no man's land into a veritable quagmire, that General Maude was

GENERAL SIR GEORGE YOUNGHUSBAND LEAVING A HOSPITAL SHIP

called upon on the 8th or 9th of April to attempt the capture of the Sannaiyat position, but this, like the preceding efforts, failed.

Those battles at Sannaiyat were the bloodiest of the series in the attempted relief of Kut ; the casualties on both sides being so great that a truce was called to enable the killed and wounded to be removed. Twice General Younghusband tried to take Sannaiyat and twice General Maude endeavoured to do so, both alike failing. It was an impossible undertaking with the means at hand. The Turks had their left flank on the Salt Lake and their right on the Tigris, and the two divisions had to go up the dead level, as open as a billiard table, on a narrow front, to attack them. There were no artillery to knock the enemy silly as they have in France.

This General Younghusband is the Sir George who wrote that delightful book " A Soldier's Memories." He led a charmed life in Mesopotamia, having three wonderful escapes. Once a bullet or piece of shrapnel hit a gold pencil-case in his pocket and glanced off leaving only a big bruise. Another time a piece of shell must have just missed his leg, as it passed under his horse and hit his sword scabbard which was hanging to a frog in the saddle on the other side. On the third occasion he and three of his staff were standing near a battery, each of them about a yard apart, when the Turks fired two " bouquets," as they were termed by the soldiers, meaning battery volleys, which burst straight through them like a storm of gigantic hailstorms, yet not one of them were touched, though a walking-stick carried by one of the staff officers was knocked out of his hand and sent spinning.

The photo of General Younghusband leaving a hospital ship looks as though his luck had deserted him and he was wounded, but he was really suffering from some sort of blood poisoning, from which he has not yet entirely recovered.

The doctors have been much puzzled over the case, some think it was caused by a fly-borne poison off a dead Turk, there were many lying about, some having died from

cholera, others from various diseases. A few of the "Faculty" thought the mischief had been done by poison from a shell or bomb. This latter theory is rather supported by the fact that exactly the same symptoms were set up in the case of a man in the Tower of London who handled some pieces of a bomb the Germans dropped near the Tower.

A friend who was in this Sannaiyat Battle with General Younghusband gives me a graphic account of its horrors. He describes how the troops had to wade through a perfect quagmire of slimy mud, while entirely exposed to a heavy fire from the Turks. It was found to be impossible to even reach the enemy trenches, for a whole division of men were flat on their faces in the mud floundering about unable to open or close the breeches of their rifles, owing to their being choked with mud. Those heroic souls tried to suck out the filth, but it was useless, and they were obliged to return as they had come without reaching their goal.

It was becoming apparent that the relief of Kut was an impossibility. Meanwhile what of those in Kut? General Townshend's *communiqués* to the troops are most pathetic reading. In January, 1916, he explained to them why he decided to make a stand at Kut during the retirement from Ctesiphon. He spoke of giving time for reinforcements to be brought up the river from Basra to "restore success to our arms." He tells the men, "all in India and England are watching us now and are proud of the splendid courage you have shown." This was followed by another dated March 10th, when he told the troops he had been disappointed of the expected relief, adding, "Hold on! You will be proud one day to say, 'I was one of the garrison of Kut!' We have out-lasted Plevna and Ladysmith. Whatever happens now, we have all done our duty."

It is easy to read between the lines and see Townshend knew all was over.

A great consultation was now held by the authorities in a poisonous spot on the banks of the Tigris amidst heat, flies, cholera, and smells, as to what was to be done, everything had gone wrong. After a lengthy discussion it was at

last agreed that it was utterly impossible with the means and numbers at command to relieve General Townshend at Kut.

One last desperate effort was made on the night of April 29th to reach the starving in that city. The fastest boat on the river named the "Julnar," under the command of Lieut. Firman, who volunteered, made this effort. Quickly and quietly the boat was packed with provisions, and the valiant men on board wished God-speed, but luck was against her; the news had somehow leaked out, and the Turks were in waiting for her and her crew. She was timed to arrive at Kut about midnight, and the besieged were expecting her, counting the moments and making excuses for her delay. At 1 o'clock a wireless message reached headquarters saying no "Julnar" had arrived and they were anxious, as heavy firing was plainly heard a little way down the river.

The firing they heard was mostly directed at the unhappy boat "Julnar," which had run into a sand-bank while rounding the Magasis peninsula, making a target for the Turks' guns Brave Firman in command was killed by a Turkish gun while giving instructions to the second in command how to "carry on." This officer's name was, I think, Cowley, or Coesley as far as I can remember, but he had no opportunity to carry on for he too was dead and the boat drifted and was knocked to pieces by the Turkish guns. Both these brave men were made posthumous V.C.'s., but what did that avail them? That was the end; the tragic and unhappy end of that phase of the Mesopotamian Campaign, and General Townshend surrendered to Major-General Khalil Pasha.

The story of this time is not yet public property, perhaps it never will be, and it is all very pitiful, but we do know of General Townshend's last *communiqué* to his troops when he had to tell them he had, while "overcome by illness and anguish of mind, to surrender to the Turkish Commander-in-Chief." Hard words for an Englishman to speak.

I have heard some pleasant stories of the treatment of our soldiers by the Turks. When General Townshend made anxious enquiries as to what had become of some of his

officers he was told they were in " excellent health and at the present moment dining with me ! "

On the other hand, I have been told some very painful stories. General Townshend felt it very much when the rumours reached his ears that he had been careless and indifferent to the treatment of his men in captivity. This might have been true of one or two other Generals of whom I have been told, one, for instance, who, in Gallipoli, insisted on having fresh water baths every day when the men had not enough water to drink.

Both officers and men have spoken bitterly to me of this, but Townshend was not a man of this sort, and he felt very keenly being kept in the dark about his men. It may not be known that he made three attempts to escape from the Turks but was unsuccessful each time, so he set to work to see what diplomacy could do, in the way of upsetting the Turkish Government. Rather risky work, and if he had been found out he would have been hung, shot, drawn and quartered or some such unpleasant experience.

He was, however, fairly successful, if all I hear is true, for Enver Pasha's rule came into ill-odour and collapsed. When the new government was formed General Townshend's help was asked ; he agreed to give this if they would promise to set him free, open the Dardanelles to England, set free the British prisoners of war, and make certain promises concerning their Black Sea Fleet. All of these promises were quickly granted.

General Townshend did not tell me this, but a friend of his did, so I presume it is correct. I know that if it was not considered against the public interest (which is such an ambiguous term) General Townshend could tell a great deal concerning the last days of Kut that would be of profound interest and most illuminating, but it must be remembered there were others in Kut as well as General Townshend

I am always being told in connection with this time that, *if* this, that, and the other had been done, all would have been well. For instance, many times I have been told that if our troops had been massed instead of working in rotation,

all would have been well. It is very easy to talk in our arm-chairs at home, but I doubt if anything different could have been accomplished with such inadequate transport, and mismanagement by those responsible in India. I am thankful the loss of all those valuable lives does not rest on my shoulders ; it would be a life-long nightmare.

'All these particulars may seem a long way from Stanley Maude, but in reality they were very near him, for he had to step into the middle of it all when in June or July, I forget which, he succeeded Sir G. F. Gorringe, following which, in August, he was selected as Commander-in-Chief in succession to Sir Percy Lake.

As I have already stated, the first few months after taking command were devoted by General Maude to improving the health and training of the troops who had suffered severely from heat and privations, to perfecting the precarious lines of communication, developing their resources, and collecting reserves of supplies, ammunition, and stores at the front.

By this time the preparations made in India and on the lines of communication in Mesopotamia were commencing to bear fruit, and the situation as regards railway communications, transport and supplies, both by land and water, though still far from satisfactory, was considerably improved.

In October the new Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Charles Monro, paid a visit of inspection and was able to judge for himself and discuss personally with the Army Commander the further necessities of the force.

During this month General Maude inspected the Euphrates and Karun fronts before moving his headquarters up the Tigris, to command personally the operations on that front. The tactical situation had not altered very materially since the fall of Kut, our troops were still held up by the Sannaiyat position on the left bank.

For two months after Maude arrived on the Tigris no active operations were possible owing to the necessity of establishing an efficient working reserve of supplies, ammunition and engineering materials at the advanced base (Sheikh Said), but while chafing and worrying at the delay

imposed on him awaiting the completion of these necessary and vital arrangements, which lost him two of the best months of the year, he devoted himself to further training of the troops and entirely reorganised the transport service. No persuasion of his subordinates could make him start operations until in his opinion all the preparations were complete.

I do not think General Maude's great personality was ever fully realised until he became responsible locally for the Mesopotamian Campaign. He now had a comparatively free hand. His every action and every thought was for other people and the work entrusted to him.

Most hearts would have quaked at what was before him, when one British Army had surrendered to the Turks, and another had been defeated in a series of attempts to relieve it, and every bazaar in the East was buzzing over our discomfiture, and we were all praying that some one might arise great enough to save our prestige.

That someone came in the form of Stanley Maude, a deeply religious, self-reliant, strong man and a genius, that ineffable mystery like the Spirit of God that bloweth where it listeth.

His amazing capacity for work and his self-reliance overshadowed all his other characteristics so completely that anyone who knew him always speaks with wonder of these qualities before all else.

The General's working day ran much as follows; every moment being carefully mapped out:

5 a.m.—Get up.

By 5.30 he generally awoke everybody in the immediate neighbourhood by his shouts for his shorthand writer and typist. It was a saying amongst the staff that he even used a shorthand writer and typist when writing to his wife!

7 a.m.—Breakfast. This meal he had with his Chief of Staff, General Money, who was considered, or who considered himself, a rapid eater, but was hopelessly left behind in the race through breakfast by General

Maude who could put away two courses while his Chief of Staff was still busy with the first. Fifteen minutes almost invariably saw Maude outside his breakfast and away at work. By 7.40 the General's motor launch had to be ready and waiting, or his shouts would be equal to those at 5.30 for the shorthand writers. From this time to 1 o'clock he worked in his office tent. At first daily, and later, once or twice a week, he had a meeting of the heads of the staff and directors in one of the larger office tents.

1–1.30.—Luncheon. Another race between Maude and the Chief of Staff to see who would be finished first !

1.30–3.30.—More office work.

3.30–5.—A ride (at a rapid pace) round one or other of the camps, hospitals or depots.

5 p.m.—Tea.

5.15–7.—Work in office.

7.30–8.30.—Dinner.

8.30–9.30.—Work in office.

9.30.—Bed.

It had to be something of the utmost importance to keep him from going to bed at 9.30 every evening. Even during big operations he stuck to his rule and was only awakened if it was a matter of absolute necessity. His Chief of Staff, General Money, received all nocturnal communications which often entailed his getting up two or three times in the night.

During active service these midnight communications may be, and probably are, important, but I remember staying once with a big official and his wife who often had these surprises at night ; at first I used to be greatly excited and think the Dutch had taken Holland or some such thing, but after a time or two I ceased to be excited when I found it only meant something had to be signed in connection with more timber for huts, changing the pattern of a button, or some such petty affair. But the galloping in the dead of night was no doubt very impressive, which politically counts for a good deal and also no doubt the big official and the galloper felt full of pride and importance.

General Maude's afternoon outing was occasionally varied by a motor drive to enable him to visit some of the more distant camps and hospitals, though he always grudged the loss of his exercise and usually tried to combine such an expedition with a furious gallop across country for half an hour, by sending on his horses. This gallop was the only form of relaxation or amusement that he allowed himself and this he took regardless of all weather conditions, even when the temperature was 125° for a fortnight. His staff begged him to give it up, but he would not hear of it. During these rides he was accompanied by two perspiring A.D.C.'s who pursued him, up and down nullahs and over all sorts of abominable country.

If, in the course of this performance, one of the A.D.C.'s known as the " fat boy " came to grief, as often happened, General Maude was so tickled that he ragged the " fat boy " about it at meals for several days. The " fat boy " was Captain Forbes of the Scottish Horse. How he remained a " fat boy " when taking these rides in the sun while other people were having sunstrokes in the shade must ever be a mystery, but perhaps he was not a " fat boy " at all. I cannot say, as I have not the pleasure of his acquaintance.

I think these rides did General Maude harm rather than good, as he lost a considerable amount of weight, and latterly began to look very thin and careworn.

Flies, which are one of the curses of the East, were intolerable in Mesopotamia. Arab villages are rather pestilential places; the inhabitants' views on cleanliness, decency and sanitation do not coincide with ours. General Maude had considerable difficulty in enforcing cleanliness and order in Baghdad at first, but to get rid of the flies to any appreciable extent was impossible, they worried those who were well, tormented the sick, and drove the animals nearly mad.

Donkeys so often considered stupid have a very good idea of looking after themselves. In the photograph two are seen standing in the smoke rising from a burning heap of rubbish, with a view to driving the flies out of their coats;

DONKEYS STANDING IN THE SMOKE OF A BURNING REFUSE HEAP IN HOPES OF DRIVING THE FLIES AWAY

and this is, I know from experience, about the only way of getting rid of them, for a time. Mr. Edmund Candler vividly describes the terror of the fly plague in one of his despatches. " As I write," he says, " I cannot see the end of my pen ! "

The meals in hospital for the sitting-up cases were all served under netting or as many flies as food would have been eaten.

The imperviousness of the natives to flies is astonishing and also rather annoying, they stand talking quite complacently to you while flies stand thick and black round their eyes and faces as though they were perfectly unaware of their proximity.

General Maude made every possible arrangement ingenuity could devise, to reduce the annoyance of these pests, and, as far as the wounded were concerned, more or less effectively.

Soldiers are wonderfully ingenious people. I suppose when driven into corners they learn to be so, they seem to find a use for everything, even a German mine. I have a photo of one which with others they have converted into a buoy to mark out the course of the river.

General Maude was very quick at everything, he ate quickly, he grasped details quickly in every department of staff work, his keenness in this direction was frequently the despair of the staff, who again and again found their best efforts to save him foiled.

Few constitutions could have stood the amount of work he managed to get through under the trying conditions of two Mesopotamian hot weathers. He, nevertheless, appeared to be able to stand the strain and was never ill, with the exception in the summer of 1916, when he had an attack of jaundice, and although as yellow as a guinea and feeling deadly sick he would not go to bed but worked on unceasingly. Again in October of the same year he had an attack of fever which alarmed his staff, who thought he must indeed be very ill as he went to bed for two days, which was, for him, an unheard of thing. General Money went secretly to the doctor and arranged to have a launch with bed

made up, to be ready on the third morning to take General Maude away from work and worry for a rest under medical care. When the launch and the doctor arrived the General was found fully dressed and hard at work with nothing but scorn for the suggested rest, so the launch went sadly down stream again.

Headquarters of an army is a big affair; some two hundred men were employed in General Maude's, but only about fifty officers composed the staff. I think he must have surprised some of them, especially the young A.D.C's., for he was a man who hated flattery or fulsomeness, and would have none of it. As this is usually considered part of their education it must have been upsetting.

Probably no general officer ever conducted a campaign with less personal kit, in fact, there were few subalterns in the army with so little as their General. From the time he took command to the day of his death he only carried one quite small hunting kit-bag. Many officers start light but their kit grows as time goes on by things sent out to them from home, but General Maude's never grew in size.

Some of his staff have declared to me they believed he only had one suit of clothes, for he was never seen in anything except the shabby old coat and breeches, while his old pair of Norwegian boots became familiar to the whole army.

His tent, like his kit, was smaller than that of anyone else, and weighed 40 lbs., being no bigger than a very modest suburban dinner-table when in position, and the ground it rested on had to be dug out inside three feet deep to enable him to stand upright in it.

Like most Guardsmen, General Maude was a strict disciplinarian, and any slackness amongst officers or men was at once dropped on, guards, escorts, orderlies were all kept up to the mark and never failed to elicit the surprised admiration of Russian officers when they visited Baghdad.

General Maude had a staff of British orderlies which he trained to a high pitch of smartness on the model of the Coldstream Guards.

There was always a queue of these orderlies outside his office. One was always ready to fly the moment he heard the cry of " orderly," then the next man took his place instantly so that when as often happened two or three were shouted for in as quick succession as the reports of a machine gun, they burst in without a moment's delay. This took some rehearsing, but they were almost perfect in the end.

General Maude possessed the faculty of appreciating the exact value of time in relation to military operations, which was one of the secrets of Napoleon's success and which sounds easy and simple, but is so difficult.

When the advance up the Tigris was taking place, General Maude directed General Marshall to cross the river with his men above Kut on a certain day. General Marshall rehearsed the crossing and found his men rowed badly and needed further practice, so asked for a delay of forty-eight hours. This request was laid before General Maude and met with a most emphatic " No, tell him that he will cross on the day named without fail."

Maude's self-reliance, to which I have already referred, was so great that even in his operations he never sought advice, he simply made his plans and announced them to his staff officers concerned. When one of them happened to disagree with any point in a plan and argued it with General Maude, he would listen attentively, occasionally a modification of the scheme would result, but more often he would tell the officer that he had listened with interest to all he had to say on the subject, but the plan would remain unaltered.

He also had a very clear perception of his own abilities, their scope and limitations, and a great tenacity of purpose, nothing could divert his attention from the main issue. The hundred-and-one temptations that beset him to send troops here and there, on missions not directly connected with the main object of beating the Turkish Army, had no effect on him. The pleas of Indian political officers to have small bodies of troops sent to remote places to " establish

influence" (that term beloved of diplomatists) was unheeded.

The modern army is so complex a machine that no single brain can control its every detail and I think General Maude's chief fault, if we may so term it, lay in his being too great a centralist. The impulse to have every thread in his own hands must have been almost irresistible. This seems inevitable in a man of such outstanding ability and untiring energy, but made it rather difficult for his staff. One of them told me he never could feel sure he could go ahead with his own particular work without finding that Maude had cut in somewhere with some decision or alteration. One of the functions of a staff is to relieve the General-in-Command of all details, and this is especially the duty of the Chief-of-Staff.

General Money often had matters in hand which he purposely said nothing about to General Maude as he judged them to be essentially matters with which the Chief-of-the-Staff should deal without troubling his General, but occasionally Maude would hear of these matters and insist on plunging into them himself.

Once a near relative of Maude's asked a brother Coldstreamer, "Tell me what is Joe's crab? Everybody has a crab; what is his?" The answer came instantly, "They say he is too great a centraliser."

I have heard complaints from some of the staff that General Maude had no lighter side of his nature, no sense of humour, or if he had, none of it was allowed to appear while in Mesopotamia. His absorption in his work was so entire that he resented even the interruption of meal times and during the meals was so absorbed mentally, and in such haste to get away, that it made the mess a very dull one. There was no chatting after dinner; if anybody wanted a little light conversation or recreation, the A.D.C's. and others sought it in some of the other headquarter messes.

The general verdict was that he was not popular with his staff, in his division, corps, or General Headquarters, but he was with the force at large who had no close and

direct dealings with him: but no one could help admiring him.

But against this, nearly every man that I have met and some that I have not, have spoken in the tenderest and highest terms of him.

General Sir Julian Byng told me, "Maude was a very great friend of mine and I feel that nothing I could say would do him justice. . . ."

General Sir Francis Davies of Elmley Castle, and lately at the War Office, knew Maude nearly all his life and speaks of him in the kindest way. They were at Eton together, went there on almost the same day and were together in the Brigade of Guards both at home and in war. They were in the 1885 Sudan Campaign and in South Africa.

Colonel William Follett, late Colonel of the Coldstream Guards, speaking of General Maude says: "His history during the war of course is England's. . . . I knew him well for more than thirty years and nothing to my mind shows his character better than what he wrote to an Eton Master shortly before his death: that he hoped his success would be dear to his old school and his old regiment, the Coldstream Guards."

Mr. de Paravicini, who knows everybody, and everybody knows, was also with him at Eton and says, his "recollections of him are what he has shown himself to be, namely, modest and absolutely thorough in everything he took up."

General Kavanagh, D.S.O., who was with him at Sandhurst, remembers he was "a very fine runner and a very nice boy, quiet and generally much liked. He had been in command of the 14th Brigade in the 5th Division when in June, 1915, I took command. I then heard a great deal about him. Everyone in the division was full of his praise. I then heard that the quiet boy I used to remember had developed into a very able soldier, full of energy and go: and everybody prophesied a great future before him if he ever got a chance. The sequel showed they were right."

General Vesey Dawson, who was also with him at Eton and in the Guards, says he hardly likes to speak of General

Maude. " He was so very superior to us all in his soldierlike qualities. . . . I could write for hours of his good qualities, but fear my language could not convey all that I should like."

General Stopford, commanding the Military College at Sandhurst, says, " In common with all those who were privileged to know him, I had the greatest admiration of his character and soldier-like qualities which his splendid achievements in Mesopotamia have shown to have been of an exceptionally high order."

General the Hon. William Lambton, D.S.O., who was with him at Eton and in the Guards, knew him intimately all his life, and Field-Marshal Lord Methuen, writing to me from Malta a short time ago telling me of the splendid work done by the nurses in the hospital there, likewise spoke of Sir Stanley Maude, saying, " General Sir Stanley Maude was my Brigade Major when I commanded the Brigade of Guards. The Guards never turned out a finer soldier or a more perfect English gentleman."

Mr. Cameron Skinner tells me he was at Hawtreys at Slough with Sir Stanley, and, " oddly enough, his son and my two boys were at the same preparatory school : and for four years Maude and myself played cricket for fathers versus sons. He was a very quiet and modest man and a good all-round athlete. He distinguished himself in the athletic sports at Sandhurst versus Woolwich. He was a very earnest Churchman and church-warden of the church where he lived in Herefordshire, and he took a great interest in the Church Lads Brigade."

General Sir William Robertson's appreciation of General Maude I have given elsewhere and it is charming. I could quote the kindly expressions of many more soldiers competent to form an opinion, but not a few seem to have so much difficulty in stringing words together it is often kinder not to quote them, and I must return to General Maude's doings in Mesopotamia.

At last the long wait was over and General Maude began his operations, which he summarises in his despatches of July 10th, 1917, as follows :

" (*a*) Consolidation of our position on the Shalt-al-Hai. Dec. 13th—Jan. 14th.

" (*b*) Operations in the Khadaire bend (E. and S.E. of Kut). Jan. 15th—19th.

" (*c*) Operations against the Hai salient (round the junction of the Tigris and Hai). Jan. 20th—Feb. 5.

" (*d*) Operations in the Dahra bend (W. and S.W. of Kut). Feb. 6th—16th.

" (*e*) Capture of the Sannaiyat position and passage of the Tigris (at the Shumran bend west of the Dahra bend). Feb. 17th—24th.

" (*f*) Advance on Baghdad. Feb. 25th—March 11th.

" (*g*) Operations subsequent to the fall of Baghdad."

All General Maude's operations subsequent to the capture of Baghdad were characterised by the same energy and keenness of military instinct which led to his first victorious advance, and no opportunity of dealing heavy blows to the enemy in detail, or of mopping up isolated detachments and anticipating their offensive was lost.

No less keen was his care of the soldiers and his attention to all details that conduced to their personal comfort and well-being.

When his quarters were at Baghdad some of the troops held a hockey match at a camp some seventy miles away at Samara.

They were very anxious that General Maude should present the prizes, but it was pointed out to them that he was far too busy to spare time necessary for such a long journey; but so anxious was General Maude not to disappoint the men that he solved the difficulty by flying over in an aeroplane, distributing the prizes and flying back, so that he was deep in office work again a couple of hours after he started, having covered one hundred and forty miles and pleased the troops immensely in that short time. It is not often that an Army Commander takes so much trouble over such a small matter.

It was the same in all other matters of courtesy, or where small actions of his could give pleasure or comfort to others.

He never failed to write to the parents or relatives of fallen officers and men in cases where he knew anything whatever of their record of service, although he was never free from the greatest pressure of work.

One of the points that always struck me as charming in General Maude's despatches and reports was the way he acknowledged the work and endeavours of the officers and men under him ; speaking of the troops during the operations which led to the fall of Baghdad, he says, " As the conditions became more trying the spirits of the men seemed to rise," and he so generously acknowledged the help of General Sir W. K. Marshall, the man who succeeded him, and I think if he had been asked who he would like to follow him, he would have named General Marshall.

It can easily be imagined how much there was that was painful to a man of General Maude's disposition, organising power, and method. The grief it was to him that the arrangements were so inadequate for the wounded, for even as late as August, 1917, there were only two or three hospital ships properly equipped solely for hospital work. As long as there was a shortage of transport for conveyance of supplies up river it was obviously uneconomical to send ships up which, under the Geneva Convention, could carry nothing except medical personnel and stores, to return with wounded.

What was done was to equip all the larger ships with medical staffs, including nursing sisters, stretchers, cots and medical appliances, send them up river loaded with stores, and then on the return journey hand them over to the medical staff for conveyance of sick and wounded. Any of the larger boats with two barges alongside could thus carry about four hundred wounded and sick.

But matters had improved in the way of care of the wounded since those terrible 1915 days when after the first battle of Kut and Ctesiphon over three thousand five hundred wounded had to be removed from the battlefield to the river banks, in some cases a distance of ten miles, without proper ambulance transport, many having to make their way back as best they could, on foot, in spite of terrible

injuries, and when they arrived at the river, bad luck still attended them, as there was found to be no proper steamer accommodation and all had to be crammed into barges minus medical attention, comforts or necessities.

The Medical Authorities at Basra had calculated on five hundred wounded at the most and prepared only for that number.

What is even more painful is the attitude of those responsible for this deplorable state of things. When General Nixon telegraphed to Medical Headquarters, saying, " I see no possible excuse for what I am forced to look on, as the most indifferent work done in the collection of the wounded," and when Major Carter, R.A.M.C., complained of the disgraceful state in which the wounded arrived at Basra, all that these men got for their humanity was to be hauled over the coals for meddling in what was not their business, or some such monstrous statement ; and both got themselves much disliked over doing what they considered to be their duty.

What those unfortunate wounded suffered cannot be dwelt upon, it is too indescribably horrible, almost incredibly horrible. Two instances will be enough to illustrate my meaning. One man with a fractured thigh perforated in five or six places had in his agony been writhing about the ship without even a bandage on his wounds and without morphia or any blessed pain-killer. Another, and not only one, was propped up with cushions formed by the dead bodies of their comrades.

How maddening it must have been to the Generals during those critical days of fighting to know that large numbers of troops and many badly needed guns were at Basra quite unable for lack of transport to be conveyed in time to take part in the fighting. Who can help pitying Generals who have to fight with their hands so tied. There is at all times a desperate amount of luck attending great military manœuvres, but in the early part of the Mesopotamian Campaign no unfortunate General seemed to have the ghost of a chance.

The Military Authorities in their report on the Mesopotamia muddle and treatment of the wounded agreed that: "There are two methods of concealing a failure. The first is to suppress all mention of it, the second is to obscure its significance by the glare of a contemporaneous achievement. The first was used at the first battle of Kut. The second after the battle of Ctesiphon when the military success of withdrawing all the wounded in the face of a pursuing enemy diverted attention from the grave medical defects which were disclosed during the course of that operation."

This seems to sum up the situation fairly accurately.

But the coming of Stanley Maude altered all this. No incompetence was possible where he reigned and he had the happiness of re-establishing the British name in the East, and it has not looked back since. General Maude's tactics and strategy in the capture of Baghdad stands out as one of the finest military achievements of the great war, and I should like, and so would many others, to see General Maude's son made a baronet and of Baghdad, to commemorate both the name of Maude and an historic achievement.

While the world was still talking of Maude's great military achievements and the King's recognition of his services in making him a knight, there came the news which took away our breath, of his illness and sudden death. He was only taken ill on Friday, November 16th, and died on Sunday, the 18th, 1917. It was a national calamity, for while ruling firmly over his newly conquered territory, his tact and kindness was rapidly gaining the confidence of the conquered.

I find few know of the crowning act of heroism that led to his death, for he verily signed his own death warrant. His natural sympathy with a suspicious people over whom he ruled led him to visit a plague-stricken spot at the invitation of the inhabitants. They were anxious to do honour to him who had shown them much kindness—unexpected kindness—and released them from generations of bondage. Their hospitality led them to offer the General food and drink. He had given strict orders that none of his escort were to touch either food or drink in any form, knowing well

the danger, but for himself he took the risk, rather than hurt the feelings of those entertaining him.

That gentle tact which we like to associate in our minds with those who are gently born, that dislike of hurting people's feelings, was essentially his, and the last thing he ever thought of was self. When the Arab priests wished him to perform or take part in some holy rite and drink a glass of water with them, he complied, with the result we already know, he was seized with cholera on the Friday and died the following Sunday. He had become so worn out with all the anxieties he had passed through and by the very little care he took of himself that he had no strength to fight the disease. He was a deeply religious man and death had no horrors for him ; he did not fear or dread it at all.

Every Sunday morning while on active service he attended the Communion Service at 6 a.m., held at that early hour so that it should not interfere with his duties during the day. His was that beautiful religion that is born in trust, lives in hope and dies in love.

He lies in the British cemetery in Baghdad, surrounded by the men who fell obeying his orders, and contributing to his fame. A wooden cross marks his grave.

Great plans had been formed in Sir Stanley's mind regarding the future of Mesopotamia ; he hoped that the reopening of the plains which should prove one of the greatest commercial gains to the world through the war, would provide happy and useful occupation for ex-soldiers after hostilities ceased. He hoped and believed that the Government would assist them in the first place, with small grants and the loan of the necessary machinery to begin farming, to be paid off by degrees after five years, or perhaps less, when the necessary irrigation and other methods of assisting farming in that land, had been carried out.

Anyone who has travelled in that country for sport, pleasure or of necessity knows what extraordinary fertile soil is found there ; with proper irrigation as many as three crops may be grown and garnered in one year and with a

minimum of labour. I have many times said it is only necessary to throw some seed in the ground, tread on it, give it some water and the obliging seed does the rest for itself.

Irrigation which is a costly matter in some countries would afford comparatively little expense and labour in Mesopotamia, for the floods from the Tigris and Euphrates could easily be made to supply all that would be wanted. General Maude knew and I know how quickly things grow out there and it has been proved by the produce of the dairy farm the army laid out in 1916. To-day, milk, vegetables, eggs, etc., are plentiful, and there is a good market for them. Fast steamers now run regularly on the rivers. Sir Stanley allowed the climate would be, and is, trying to English people, but so are the climates of other countries which we embrace and say nothing of, or perhaps very little, and he considered the extreme heat might be mitigated by making canals.

Germany of course knew the value of the country for commercial as well as for military reasons, and that was why they put down the famous Baghdad railway, which now reaches Basra on the south and goes some distance beyond Samara, or Samarrah.

A memorial is being subscribed to in Mesopotamia ; when last I heard from Basra nothing had been decided as to how the funds should be expended so as to perpetuate the memory of the Avenger of Kut. There have been many suggestions as to the form the memorial should take, one being that a memorial gate should be erected at the north end of the city of Baghdad. At Basra, where 107,000 rupees were subscribed, on the opening of the list, the local people, amongst whom are many wealthy merchants, expressed the wish that a civil hospital should be built and that if this was agreed to they would add fifty per cent to the amount already subscribed by Basra. The hospital plan has met with many influential people's approval. The sheikh of Mohammerah has sent 10,000 rupees, while four local Arab sheikhs at 'Amara have given 29,000 rupees on top of the

subscription of 30,000 rupees subscribed by that small town the first day the subscription was opened. This is only the civilian memorial, the soldiers' memorial is entirely separate, and that also has not been decided yet.

I do hope that whatever is finally agreed upon, in both cases, will be something useful, that will benefit humanity. I think a hospital, or a training college for ex-soldiers, to learn farming suitable to the country, in some suitable and chosen spot, would have been the two plans that would have appealed the most strongly to Maude himself. Neither city gates nor monuments would have been pleasing to him.

Stanley Maude's last despatch was written on October 15th, 1917, a very short time before his fatal illness. Every word of it is interesting, but too lengthy to quote verbatim here. It deals with the operations in Mesopotamia from April 1st to September 30th after the capture of Baghdad and concerns his provisions for the security of that city. Every word is well chosen and the character of the soldier writing it breathes in every line. He had the forethought of Lord Roberts and the unalterable determination and calculation of Kitchener, to which was added his own characteristic precision in detail and quickness in carrying out designs he had weighed and approved.

It will be remembered that Kut had been retaken on February 24th, and General Maude pursued the fleeing Turks after three days' battle capturing Baghdad on March 11th.

On September 28th, 1917, he defeated the Turks at Ramadie on the Euphrates, surrounding them and taking 3550 prisoners including the Turkish Commander, Ahmed Bey, his staff and about thirteen guns.

Describing the operations from April 2nd when he had joined hands with General Baratoff near Kizil Robat he explains that the movements on both banks of the Tigris which had for a time been suspended were now resumed, and on April 6th he ordered our cavalry forward, to near Deli Abbas, with instructions to cover our right flank and draw on gradually any movement initiated by the 13th

Turkish Corps towards the Tigris. On the left of the river he decided not to commit our troops to any definite action until the intentions of the Turks became clear. On the right bank of the Tigris the enemy's force was estimated at 4000 rifles with 200 sabres and 16 guns and these were holding Harbe with advanced troops about Beled Station. On the 8th our troops moved forward to attack the enemy's position covering Beled Station, and good progress was made until they came under close machine-gun and rifle fire from some rising ground in the immediate neighbourhood. The 51st Sikhs were ordered to secure this point, and, making good use of the broken ground and being well supported by artillery, they established themselves there without much difficulty and pressed forward beyond. Finding the position untenable the enemy retreated. Our losses were slight, but the enemy in addition to his battle casualties lost 200 prisoners, including nine officers, three machine-guns and some rolling stock. Harbe was occupied on the 9th.

On the left bank of the river our troops were busy. The 2nd and 14th Turkish Divisions, some 6000 rifles strong, with 250 sabres and 32 guns, were moving down the banks of the Nahr Khalis Canal. Our cavalry were ordered to fall back and entice them on while our artillery inflicted substantial casualties on their marching columns.

Describing in technical language the movements of the enemy, General Maude explains his method of frustrating them. After a night march, two Welsh battalions and the Wiltshires completely surprised the enemy, and before they had time to recover themselves had suffered heavy casualties from our well-handled artillery and rifle fire.

The Turks were fighting a stubborn rearguard action throughout the 13th and 14th and our progress was slow. During the night of the 14th and 15th the enemy continued his retreat on Kipri, and on the 15th our pursuit was stopped. Over 300 of the enemy's dead were buried, one gun and eighty prisoners captured by us.

The 13th Turkish Corps being temporarily disposed of, it

was decided to deal with the detachment of the 18th Turkish Corps still holding the passage of the Shatt El Adhaim. Early in the morning of the 18th the operations of forcing this passage were commenced by our troops; by 6.30 they were sufficiently established on the right bank to allow of a bridge being thrown across the river. The channel was narrow and full of quicksand, which caused delay, but at 11.40 the bridge was completed and by 2 p.m. our infantry had cleared the loop of the river and were moving towards the Barura peninsula. The Turkish opposition had collapsed, prisoners were coming in and a composite cavalry brigade moved forward in pursuit.

General Maude's own words in regard to this juncture were: "This brigade skilfully handled pushed on resolutely, and in spite of heat and want of water succeeded in turning the enemy's retreat into a rout. His casualties in killed and wounded were heavy and 1300 prisoners—of which twenty-six were officers, and six machine-guns were captured. Indeed, only a small fraction of the troops opposed to us that day effected their escape. In this action an Indian cavalry regiment, the Horse and Field Artillery Batteries, and four Lancashire battalions, especially distinguished themselves. . . ."

"The enemy's opposition on the left bank having been completely destroyed a further advance was now ordered on the right bank. The Turks were holding a strong position about Istabulat facing south-east with their left resting on the river and extending over a frontage of about 2½ miles across the Dujail Canal to the Baghdad-Samarrah railway.

"The position was a strong one and was held by some 6700 rifles, with 200 sabres and 31 guns, while in the vicinity of Samarrah were reserves consisting of some 4000 rifles, with 500 sabres and 15 guns. At 5 a.m. on the 21st his position on the north side of the canal was resolutely attacked by the Black Watch and 8th Gurkhas under a creeping barrage, and both battalions made steady progress. In spite of a hot rifle and machine-gun fire from the main

position the redoubt near the river was captured and the garrison made prisoners. The other redoubt on this side of the canal was assaulted, recaptured by the enemy, and finally secured by us, thus giving our troops a good foothold in this part of the enemy's defences. At 6.30 a.m. an attack by the Seaforths and 28th and 92nd Punjabs was launched south of the canal. This advance was carried out with fine dash and gallantry across 2000 yards of ground devoid of cover, and by 7.25 a.m. the enemy's front line some 700 yards long was in our hands. Consolidation proceeded and in spite of several counter-attacks all gains were held.

"On the 22nd our troops moved forward at daybreak and were in contact with the enemy's main body in the vicinity of Istabulat Police Post by noon, where his defensive system consisted of detached groups of trenches partially completed. The heat was great and the attack was postponed till the evening. The assault aided by concentrated artillery fire was delivered in dashing style by the Leicesters, supported by the 51st Sikhs and 56th Rifles, and the defence was easily penetrated. The attacking troops pressed on relentlessly and rapidly some 1200 yards further, and the enemy's guns were only withdrawn just in time to avoid capture.

"Our captures of the 21st and 22nd amounted to 20 officers and 667 other ranks taken prisoners, 14 Krupp guns, one 5.9 gun damaged, two machine-guns, 16 engines and 240 trucks, two barges, many rifles and much ammunition and equipment. At 10 a.m. on the 23rd Samarrah Station was secured, the enemy offering no further resistance, and on the 24th Samarrah town on the left bank was occupied and a post established there."

Sir Stanley Maude then continues describing a gallant attack delivered against the enemy on the left bank of the Tigris by several Lancashire battalions resulting in 100 Turks buried and 150 made prisoners. He further describes the Cheshires and South Wales Borderers attacking brilliantly over a thousand yards of level plain, yet immediately successful; 214 dead were buried, 365 prisoners, guns, equipment and all kinds of ammunition. He speaks most

highly of the Buffs, who especially distinguished themselves on several occasions, adding :

" Fighting in the heat and the constant dust storms imposed a severe strain on the troops and the absence of water tested their stamina very highly, but as the conditions became more trying the spirit of the men seemed to rise, and they maintained the same high spirit of discipline, gallantry in action and endurance which had been so noticeable throughout the army during the operations which led up to the fall of Baghdad."

It was while the Cheshires' and South Wales Borderers' brilliant attack was in process, that two companies which had lost all their officers advanced too far in pursuit ; they certainly captured two batteries, some machine-guns and many prisoners, but while still cut off from the remainder of the forces they were counter-attacked ; a gallant hand-to-hand fight followed ; but few have lived to tell the tale.

The Turks did not seem to be discommoded by the dust storms as our troops were, but there they were on ground of which they knew every inch. Of course these details could not enter into an official report.

It has always struck me as curious that while the Turks avowedly admired Sir Stanley Maude and his measures, they did not realise the conceptions of his brain. I have had it from very reliable authority that they never for a moment thought that he could be successful in crushing them ; yet bit by bit, yard by yard, he did it. But never would he allow that the success was due to his own initiative, and he was not one of the men who pooh-pooh congratulations with a view to his place in the picture ; he really was embarrassed when his genius was praised and he was congratulated on his success. He used to say in quite an injured tone, " Don't congratulate *me*, it was the men who did it."

There never was a man who felt more uncomfortable in borrowed plumes. Yet he might well have accepted his share, for he had thought out every detail, the movement of the troops, and how each battalion should be handled, but he gave the whole credit to his subordinates ; he would

not allow that his heart and brain had brought about our success; still I doubt if in the whole history of this great war any one man has brought off such a series of victories off his own bat, so to speak.

His success is the more wonderful when we remember the troops he commanded had met with nothing but reverse and he had to inspire a dispirited band. Yet those who were the most closely associated with him out in Mesopotamia tell me there was a calm encouraging certainty about him that he was going to give the Turks a lesson, which did in a great measure inspire the men. General Maude made a point, and it was one much appreciated by all grades, of presenting medal ribbons to those who had distinguished themselves directly an action was over. I have so often felt that the delay that is so general robs the recipient of much of the thrill and glory of the moment. Besides which many know there is little chance of living to see the looked-for-ward-to moment, the recognition of their services.

Only those who have experienced 122 degrees of moist heat can form any idea of the conditions many of these brave men fought in, laden with accoutrements, and only those who have had lengthy spells of time in the Far East know the depressing feeling of being forgotten, and the desolation that is at times overpowering, and well those soldiers, both officers and men, knew how little chance there was of seeing home again. Home, that blessed word which means so much to us all, where our ideals were born and where many of them lie buried.

One of those who were with General Maude after the occupation of Baghdad has given to me an account of the florid proclamation he had to deliver to the occupants of that city as well as to the conquered generally. No child could have been deceived into believing it emanated from himself. It was most unlike him in diction, and also in feeling on several points. It really was manufactured in Whitehall or its immediate neighbourhood.

Amongst other things the General had to explain, was our love for the Arabs, disapproval of the Turks, hopes in the

SIR STANLEY MAUDE'S ENTRY INTO BAGHDAD

future, taking care to avoid details, no policy having been really decided upon.

In his heart General Maude did not care for eulogising the Arabs, he had no warm corner for them, and he did admire the Turks, their fighting qualities appealed to him, though he recognised the inadvisability of their rule. He was more at home when advising those he was addressing to come forward and assist in managing their own affairs.

Stanley Maude had a dislike to anything in the nature of playing to the gallery, and he felt in a measure he was in this position when delivering the proclamation which had been created some time in advance and sent out from home by someone who had well looked up his biblical history. But it was soon over and he was a sportsman as well as a soldier.

It is the sportsmen who do great deeds. I wish more of them had survived to people this world with little chips from the old block, and fewer conscientious objectors.

Sir Stanley Maude was a sportsman all the time, in his play, in his work, in his death. He was the Maude who at Eton in 1882 was reserve man for the eight, which, captained by F. E. Churchill, brought back to Eton from Henley the Ladies' Plate, which had not been won by the school for twelve years. He also rowed " 3 " in the final of House Fours, which race his crew won from Mr. Carter's House by only a foot. In 1881 he won the steeplechase, and the following year ' the mile." He was also whip to the Beagles in 1882.

Later at Sandhurst he won three races in one day, the half-mile, mile, and the three miles, against Woolwich.

As he grew older his companions used to chaff him about his passion for exercise ; he used to reply he liked to keep himself fit for action, he might be wanted some day. He was amongst the few who foresaw the war when the majority said it was a case of the Russian scare all over again, simply " Wolf—wolf" when no wolf came.

It was a sportsman that wrote the following letter to an old army colleague whom I know, who has given me permission to use it, having been written by Sir Stanley Maude in answer to one of congratulations :

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
MESOPOTAMIA EXPEDITIONARY FORCE,
January 22nd, 1917.

MY DEAR—

Many thanks for your letter dated the 9th ult., and for the good wishes that it contained. I can assure you that I appreciate them very greatly, more especially so coming as they do from one whom I have had the honour of serving under in the field.

I cannot help feeling, however, that you rate any services I may have rendered too highly, for I think that any measure of success I may have gained during the war has been due almost entirely to those men I have had the good fortune to command.

We have had a very strenuous time out here. Our long line of communications by water, with, at first, inadequate river craft, the absence of roads and railways, the lack of water except at the rivers, the great shortage of local supplies and the long time which it necessarily takes for our stores and supplies to reach us, all make it an intensely complicated problem. But it is at the same time an absorbingly interesting one and I live every minute of it.

When I first took over command I devoted three months to organisation and developing our resources and that done I moved my headquarters up to the front. In the middle of December, having accumulated a sufficiency of supplies, we were well forward to warrant a movement.

Everyone is cheery and in good spirits, and the men get good food and plenty of it. The transport and supply arrangements are working magnificently, and with everyone pulling together like one man we are bound to make progress. In fact, it is indeed a privilege to command forces full of such willing, obedient and gallant soldiers.

Will you please forgive these very hurried lines, but I am very busy ?

Yours sincerely,

F. S. MAUDE.

Another letter dated October 14th, 1917, which was received by Mr. E. L. Vaughan of Eton College, says :

" It was a stern and severe struggle during last winter, but thanks to the magnificent qualities of all ranks in this army we succeeded in dealing the Turks a stunning blow.

" Two thoughts were uppermost in my mind throughout, one that the old regiment (Coldstream Guards) would be proud and the other that the old school would be pleased."

There is not much first person singular about these documents or much bombast. He was a very gentle conqueror, and an appreciative commander. Essentially one of those men who advise and administer other people's business brilliantly while greatly neglecting their own ; for surely a man of his concentration, genius and adaptability should have been able to make fortunes for himself. Yet he lived and died a comparatively poor man ; his will made me sad ; though we are not in the habit of expecting soldiers to leave much wealth. He left his medals, decorations, trophies, diaries, silver cup and the gold cigarette case given to him by King George to his son, to be treated as heirlooms or, at his discretion, to be given to the Buffs or Coldstream Guards. He also left to his son, General Sir F. F. Maude's (Sir Stanley's father) Victoria Cross, medals, orders and decorations, trophies of the Crimean and Indian Campaigns, his swords and " Thanks " of both Houses."

At the end of his will comes this tender message, " I hope my children will help, love and protect their mother, and befriend each other."

The memorial service held in St. Paul's Cathedral in memory of Lieutenant-General Sir Stanley Maude, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., was impressive as most military funerals are, but there was an extra pathos about this gathering, for all present had come to do honour and show respect for what ?—Not a dear old time-expired General who had done great deeds and lived to reap his rewards, and bask in the

sunshine of the world's approval, yet who might be glad to lay aside the mask and mantle of this world, having outlived all his comrades—but this was different—oh, so different, for a young man—a man in the prime of his life—was mourned—who had used all the talents with which he had been blessed to see through a great trust that had been placed in his hands, who had succeeded almost beyond what was hoped for, a man who had suddenly found himself, had earned the gratitude of his country, who had been counting the days until he felt he could honourably, and unselfishly, seek a rest, and return to his home to see in the eyes of those dear to him their pride and pleasure, tears of happiness and thanksgiving, that their man had done this thing, and had returned safely to them. But he had been called away at the moment when his cup was full to the brim with unmeasured happiness, and humanly speaking his own hand dashed away that cup. No orders had been issued obliging him to visit a plague-stricken area to greet Arabs anxious to meet him—no orders obliged his drinking from the cup that might and probably would spell death; he had forbidden any of his men to touch either food or drink.

An Arab paper speaking of the General after his death said, "He died a victim to the inbred courtesy of a fine character." No words of mine can better that.

Under the dome of St. Paul's special places had been reserved for ticket-holders and a detachment of Coldstream Guards with, of course, their band. Lady Maude, the widow, who is an invalid, chose the music, and she was at the service, hidden away in a quiet corner with her grief.

In the centre under the dome, General Sir William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial Staff, present on behalf of the King, Colonel Sir Henry Streatfield, Private Secretary, representing Queen Alexandra, Captain Liddell for Princess Christian, and Colonel Kernon Chato for Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll. The Duke of Connaught, senior Colonel of the Brigade of Guards, occupied the chief seat under the dome, and the cathedral was packed with well-

known people, all of whom came because they cared—and so amid the ghosts of many mighty dead the De profundis was sung and many prayers were breathed, that Time, merciful Time, might bring comfort to those who had loved him.

In a measure I am glad Sir Stanley Maude died when he did, while still basking in the sunshine of popularity, and before any of the happiness and glory of his achievements could be wrested from him. It is so painful when we see brave men who have been patted on the back and congratulated in the morning thrown from their pedestals in the evening, to suffer in all probability for no fault of their own.

During the funeral at Baghdad an enemy aeroplane was over the city and amidst the din of anti-aircraft guns the soldier was buried. A day or two later a Turkish aeroplane flew low down over the British Residency and dropped a message of sympathy and made away again swiftly and safely. A touching tribute to a gallant soldier from a gallant foe!

A memorial is being subscribed to in Baghdad and it is suggested that it shall take the form of a home of rest for tired fighting men where they can recoup their strength, preference being given to those who fought in Mesopotamia.

When I think of all the mothers' sons that have been sacrificed in this war those lines of Stella Benson's come back to me:

Come home, come home, you million ghosts,
The honest years shall make amends,
The sun and moon shall be your hosts,
The everlasting hills your friends.
And some shall seek their mothers' faces,
And some shall run to trysting-places,
And some to town, and others yet
Shall find great forests in their debt.
Oh! I would seize the golden waste
Of space, and climb high heaven's dome,
So I might see those million ghosts come home.

APPRECIATION OF SIR STANLEY MAUDE
BY
GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON

1 HYDE PARK GARDENS, W. 2.
15th May, 1919.

DEAR MRS. STUART MENZIES,

Your little note of April 29th, telling me you are going to write something about my old friend, Sir Stanley Maude, and asking me if I can help you by sending you a few appreciative words. First, let me tell you how interested I am to hear you are going to say something about that remarkable soldier, who has added rich provinces to our Empire and even richer traditions to our military annals. I say I am glad you are writing this because I know you are appreciative of the forward and gallant qualities in a soldier. They are rarer than is thought, but Maude possessed them in the highest degree. As to putting my own views on paper for you, if you think anything I can say can add to the laurels of a triumphant soldier like Maude, my tribute is very much at your service.

Maude arrived at the Dardanelles on the 23rd August, and I saw him and had a long talk with him on that day. He was an old friend and service comrade of mine, and I was glad indeed to see him at a moment when things were not quite *couleur de rose*. I gave him command of the 13th Division, which had lost very heavily in the fighting during the earlier part of the month. As it had not received any reinforcements worth speaking of, and had, also, lost its esteemed commander, General Shaw, who had been invalided home, the division was rather down in its luck. In a very short time Maude had worked up the spirits of his men and imbued them with his own ardour. In my diary under the date of 3rd September, 1915 (i.e. only eleven days after Maude's arrival), I wrote, 'The only General I struck to-day whose mind seems to go beyond the needs of the moment is Maude. He is straining at the leash to have a cut in at the Turks

somehow or other, and somewhere or other as quick as he can.' From first to last Maude was a thick and thin supporter of the Dardanelles idea. He was convinced that if we could only get our depleted ranks filled and a fair amount of ammunition according to standards then prevailing in France, we could drive the Turks back far enough to let the Fleet go through. Further, it was his firm conviction, that even if we did not get this amount of assistance, and were not able to drive the Turks back, still, by merely holding on, we could bleed the Turkish Empire to death.

When the evacuation was decided on he was very much distressed, believing a fatal mistake had been made and that a great prolongation of the war must ensue, especially by the freeing of large bodies of Turkish troops to move against us in Mesopotamia and against the Russians in the Caucasus.

At the actual evacuation Maude had to carry out the disembarkation from Gully Beach, which was on the western coast of the southern, or Helles, area. General Sir Herbert Lawrence was commanding the rearguard and embarked from 'W' Beach at the toe of the Peninsula. The storm which suddenly came on made Gully Beach impracticable, so Maude had to trek down to 'W' Beach and embark there. He was about the last man off on the whole Peninsula and did much to keep everyone cool and steady, refusing for one thing on any terms to part with a huge valise he was carrying. In consequence some amusing verses were written as a parody on 'Come into the garden, Maud,' where the troops are supposed to be bewailing his reluctance to leave enemy soil.

I have not in this letter touched on Maude's personal side, but no doubt you will get that from other sources. He was a charming and a chivalrous character. During his life he possessed a multitude of friends, and he died where he would have chosen to die—at the head of an army that adored him.

Yours very sincerely,

IAN HAMILTON.

CHAPTER III

A tragedy in the hills—My ayah is communicative—A lonely invalid—A lady without a name—An embarrassing situation—Red tape amongst the doctors—The chaplain finds it very awkward—A bundle of flannel—A pitiful letter—Last words—Two English pennies—Author interviews a stranger—The reason of it all—Happenings of political importance—The Afghan Boundary Commission—Future possibilities—Railway lines of consequence—A prophecy fulfilled—German intrigues in Afghanistan—Uninterned Germans—A German mission to Afghanistan—An awkward moment for the Amir—Electric light at Kabul—Lord Kitchener and the Amir's cars—Beware of German missionaries—Germany's interest in Persia—Why the commission was necessary—Sir Donald Stewart gives his orders—Searching for water—Members of the commission—An inconvenient route—The Amir perturbed—Some pig-sticking—The British meet with a rebuff—A jumping-off ground for Russia—Colonel Ridgeway at Pandjeh—An agreement broken—The Russians under General Komaroff—" A regrettable incident "—Sir Peter Lumsden's mistaken policy—The commission feels small.

FROM Mesopotamia my mind has travelled on to India, where I once got mixed up in a very tragic and strange affair in a hill station. The husband in the story I am about to tell is alive to-day and holding high office; I hope he will see this chapter and feel ashamed.

When I was going to bed one night my ayah was full of conversation as she brushed my hair; amongst the things she imparted to me was the news that an English memsahib was very ill in a bungalow near the Bazaar, all alone, and a baby had been born, there was nobody with the lady but an old ayah and a bearer who had come up to the hills with her, and they were very queer people—would not go into the Bazaar to smoke and chat in a friendly way, but always stayed at the bungalow.

She, Munie, had passed on the way to find out why the

dhobie had not brought the washing home, and talked to the strange ayah who told her all about the sick lady.

I dismissed the ayah, and tried to woo sleep, but being one of those people who indulge in the dangerous and unhappy prerogative of thinking, to which sleep strongly objects, the dusty miller refused to be wooed. I kept thinking of the poor lonely woman in the bungalow near and all alone. Why should she haunt me? It was not an unusual thing for an Englishwoman to come up to the hills in search of health, or to have her baby. Perhaps I was impressed by the ayah's story and the strangely beautiful stillness of the hour—or was it that sternly silent moon looking coldly in at me through the verandah, telling me another soul hard by was weathering the storm all alone, in need of help and sympathy? Should I go in the morning and see if she wanted anything? Ask her name, and see if I could do anything for her? Supposing the ayah had exaggerated, and I was told politely to mind my own business? Well, what of that? I should have the satisfaction of knowing either that she had all she wanted, or that I could be of some use. Yes, I would certainly go and ask in the morning. Then a little of Seneca's philosophy descended on me as I remembered, "he grieves more than is necessary who grieves before it is necessary," and fell asleep.

Next morning after riding up a precipitous path, the bungalow described by my ayah came in view; it looked very deserted—not a sign of life anywhere. My *sais* (groom) called "*Qui hie,*" the usual unpolished demand for "somebody" to come and answer the door, but there came nobody, so dismounting and leaving the pony with the *sais* I lifted up the reed blind (passing under the name of chick, which is supposed to keep out the flies and prevent people seeing in) and entered.

The room was barely furnished and untenanted. On a little table by a sofa stood a work-basket, and beside it a book lying open on its face. Thinking the owner's name might be inside it, and so help me, I picked it up. On the

cover was inscribed " Omar Khayyàm," and on the title page, " To my dearest—' May the Lord watch between thee and me when we are apart from one another.' " That was all, so it did not help me much. Placing it again as I had found it, I wandered on into the next room—empty, but for a bedstead in the middle, in true Oriental style ; and on the floor a half-unpacked box, with dresses and photo frames strewn beside it.

Retracing my steps, I thought I would try the other end of the house, and drawing back a heavy *purdah* (curtain) entered another room. Here evidently was the object of my search, for the bed covered with a dainty lace bedspread was occupied by a girl with large violet eyes and a profusion of red-brown hair the colour of a horse-chestnut when the sun shines on it. Her face was very pale, and the skin drawn tight over the little pointed nose and away from her teeth. A map of blue veins was traced on her brow and round her nose ; even so, she was beautiful, she must have been glorious in health.

I introduced myself, saying I had heard from my ayah she was alone and ill, so had called to see if there was anything I could do for her. She did not speak, but gave a little sigh —a sort of dry sob, the thin white hand lying on her chest trembled, she never took her large earnest eyes off my face, and I saw big silent tears were running races down the sides of her face, seeing which could hide itself quickest in the mass of matted hair lying in such profusion around her.

I took the little cold hand in mine, and wiped away the tears. This, instead of soothing her, as I had hoped, produced a convulsion of sobs and grief, the little body seemed as if it must fall to pieces under such emotion. She turned her head away and pulled her hair down over her face with trembling fingers, but did not speak. Thinking perhaps it would be kind to leave her for a while, I moved out on to the verandah.

Here just under the window fast asleep was the old ayah rolled up in her sleeping blanket. With some difficulty I awoke her, as she was dazed with sleep and opium. After

waiting patiently for a short time, she pulled herself together sufficiently to answer my questions.

What was the mem-sahib's name? She did not know. How long had they been up on the hills? The answer to this required grave thought and calculation, at last she came to the conclusion it was " 40 sleeps ago," which I presume meant about six weeks. Had she known the lady long? No, the sahib had engaged them at ——, she and the bearer, to come up to the hills with them. The sahib came too, but only stayed one day, gave them a month's money and went away. She had not seen him since, and did not know where he lived, as both she and the bearer were told to be on the station to meet the evening train; they were then shown into a carriage all by themselves next door to the sahib and mem-sahib, that was all she knew. Had she sent for a doctor to attend the lady? No, the mem-sahib said she did not want one, would be very angry if one came, so when the baby came she ran to the Bazaar for a woman accustomed to these things.

I stood still thinking for a moment. Here was a curious state of things for the nineteenth century—a sick woman, evidently of gentle birth, without a name, who would not or could not speak, certainly very ill, and nobody with her. It was most embarrassing, evidently she did not wish to see anybody, as the ayah said she would not even see a doctor. I might very easily, instead of helping her, complicate matters.

One thing, however, was quite certain, I could not go and leave her as she was, for that she was seriously ill I could not doubt. Looking round for the ayah I found she had disappeared, but now the bearer was standing near me making profound salaams.

I asked what food the lady took, and was told she had soup and brandy. Asking for some of the latter and mixing it with water, I returned to the bedroom and persuaded her to drink it. She was now quite calm, but exhausted, and her pulse very feeble.

Determined to go and find a doctor, I told her how sorry I was to see her so ill, but she must cheer up and look upon

me as a friend, who would take care of her and fetch a doctor to make her better.

This seemed to rouse her, for in a weak voice she thanked me for my kindness, and expressed a wish to be left alone, and she would not have a doctor, it would soon be over, and she added, "and I shall be oh—so—glad!" Her pulse was better, the brandy was doing its work, her eyelids drooped, and I left her in forgetfulness of her grief and pain.

On my return home I wrote to the English doctor in attendance on the Chief Commissioner and asked him to go and see the girl, for she did not look more than eighteen. In reply came a polite note saying how much pleasure it would have given him to comply with my request, but professional etiquette prevented him interfering with other people's patients. Such is the red tape of India.

So I sat down and wrote to the doctor at the depot; he likewise was sorry, but he could not interfere with other people's patients. The unfortunate girl did not seem to come under anybody's category. What was to be done? I decided to ask the regimental doctor at the depot to come and talk to me about it and advise me, which he kindly did, saying a civilian doctor must attend her, not one of which was in the station at the time.

I then wrote and asked the chaplain what I had better do; he replied he did not know, "it was really very awkward," he would call and see "this person," who he feared must be a strange character and probably "very unsatisfactory."

I had tried to frighten the ayah and bearer into being attentive by telling them if the lady died from want of food and attention they would get into trouble, so they must be very careful of her. How I wished my husband was in the hills with me, to advise and tell me what I had better do.

Next morning I went as early as I could to see how the invalid was; this time I was greeted by a faint smile, but still she did not speak. As she looked very uncomfortable with her pillows slipping out from under her head, I went to rearrange them and put the bed straight. As I turned

the sheet back smoothly, I discovered that in her left arm, held tight to her body, was a bundle of flannel. Of course, this was the baby my ayah had spoken of. Why had I not thought of it before? How quiet it had been!

I remarked, "How quiet your baby is. May I look at it? I love babies." She turned her eyes on me in a perfect blaze and said, "For God's sake, leave me alone, let me die in peace." But I was uneasy, and said, "I *must* look at the baby," also that my whole wish was to help her, which would be much easier if only she would trust me and tell me how that could best be done.

She implored me to leave her and the baby alone, saying it had never ceased crying from the moment it was born till the day before I went to see her, and now it was asleep, quite quiet, and she did not want it disturbed. However, I turned back the flannel. Yes, certainly it was sleeping, it would never do anything else again, but it must sleep elsewhere, poor little starved, pinched atom!

I tried very gently to take it away, but the poor little mother clung to it, refusing to give it up, saying, "Why do you come and interfere? No, I will not give it up, it is my very own, all that is left to me; and I have paid a great price for it. Yes, I know it is dead, and I am very glad, I prayed it might die and be taken out of its misery, for it had cried so pitifully, I want to keep it and be buried with it, only I take so long to die."

How dark the room was growing—and what was the matter with my eyes? I groped my way out on to the verandah.

What was to be done? It was too ghastly! I decided to go up to Government House and explain it all to the Lieutenant-Governor and his charming wife, whom I liked very much. They at once sent their own doctor to look after her. I waited outside on the verandah, he seemed a very long time in the invalid's room and everything was so quiet. At last I heard steps behind me—it was the doctor carrying the poor little bundle of flannel. I wanted to speak, but something in my throat prevented me He paused by

me for a moment, saying, " Can you go and sit by her till I come back? I have given her an injection of morphia, and she is asleep. I will make all the arrangements about *this*."

I was beginning to feel rather as if I wanted the doctor myself, my legs would hardly carry me back to the bedside, where I sat down to wait. All was so still, the fragile-looking, pathetic figure on the bed hardly seemed to breathe. On the table by her stood a little gold clock, the ticking of which got on my nerves. In a leather case made with doors that opened and shut was a crucifix.

After a while she moaned and seemed to be waking, for she put her hand as if to feel under her pillow, and as my eye followed the movement I saw a little pink knitted baby shoe almost hidden out of sight; perhaps I had better take it away, it could be nothing but a fresh agony to her when she awoke, for there is nothing makes one feel more dead than the sight of dear, familiar, precious things in their accustomed places when the owners no longer need them.

When the doctor returned, he said he had brought a woman who could be relied on to stay by the invalid for the night, for which I was truly thankful, yet I could not stay away so long, and sent for my things for the night, resting on the sofa in the drawing-room.

Early in the morning I thought I heard her voice, so went in and sat by her; she never asked for her baby, and seemed very calm, but I saw she was sinking. Between sips of medicine and brandy and little sleeps, I heard the story.

She was nineteen. Her name was Daphne ——, and her husband was very jealous and drank at times heavily. She did not love him—how could she—but she loved with a consuming passion another man, then she thought when her baby was going to be born it would not be blessed if she did not confess to her husband that she loved someone else. Her husband was furious, and said dreadful things, and that the child should not be born in his home, he had done with her, and he brought her up to the hills with strange servants who stole all her things, and told her that she could now send for her lover and please herself.

' She had written to him and explained her husband had cast her off, and would he come to her, but no answer had ever been received, and now she was too ill to write, so would I write for her and say, " Dear Heart, why have you never come ? You always said I had only to call and you would hear, you knew you would, and come even if it was from the ends of the earth, but it is too late now, my baby is dead, and taken from me, and I am going too—very soon. Dear Heart, how I have loved you. Good bye ! I would not have been so unkind to you."

Here I held her hand while she signed " Daphne." I posted the letter myself, went back to her and stayed till the early dawn, when the crows began to quarrel on the verandah and the parakeets to screech in the trees. The end was very near. I asked her if there were any wishes she would like me to carry out. I think she said, " No." I knelt down beside her so as to catch any words if she spoke. I heard " dear heart," but could catch none of the rest, and with a gentle sigh the spirit was freed from its tired, broken-hearted body.

I felt as if I wanted to go home to bed, to pull the clothes over my head, and not speak again for weeks, but I could not make up my mind to leave her there all alone, not one soul to be sorry, not one to treat the poor little body with the reverence due to such a wealth of love.

I took the violets out of my dress, and put them in her hands, and, kneeling down beside her, poured out one last poor plea, " Oh, be gentle with her, Death ! "

I straightened out the limbs and closed the violet eyes, but they would not stay closed; what could I do ? I remembered in my purse I had two English pennies I kept to remind me of the dear old country ; these I placed as little shutters to the windows of the now untenanted home, for the spirit was free. In my little handbag there was a clean handkerchief with a lace edge, I laid this over her face, left the house in charge of the ayah and sent the bearer with a note to the doctor to make the necessary arrangements.

After I reached home I remembered I had left my purse

on the table by Daphne's bed, and that I ought to put all her things together and take care of them, so in the afternoon I went back, to find the house deserted, the ayah and bearer disappeared, also all Daphne's pretty things *and the two English pennies.* The doctor came with a soldier's wife to do all that was left to be done, for at sunset she was to be taken to her last resting-place ; in the East there is seldom any delay—we are dead in the morning, buried at night, and forgotten next day.

My heart was full of bitterness for the man she had loved so dearly. How could he be so inhuman ? The address was in my pocket, should I write and tell him it was all over ? I had just returned from the dear little cemetery, so beautifully kept ; having been the sole mourner for one I had only known so short a time. It all seemed so pitiful and tragic, perhaps having had several sleepless nights I was overwrought, but without waiting to even take off my hat I threw myself down on the sofa and sobbed.

I heard a great clatter outside, in a vague far-off way, but having said " *Dawaza Bund,*" which answers to our English " not at home," I did not trouble, probably somebody's pony was frisky and quarrelsome.

My bearer entered, very apologetic for disturbing me, but there was a sahib who would not go away, he seemed to be mad. I looked at the card—it was Daphne's lover. Yes, let him come in ; I should be glad of an opportunity to tell him what I thought of him.

There entered a tall handsome man of about thirty, who said he had been to the bungalow where Daphne had written from, or, rather, the letter I had written and she had signed ; he had only found a soldier locking up the house who told him to come to me as I had nursed her and buried her that evening. Sobs, terrible sobs shook him and made him tremble from head to foot. My anger was gone, and here were we, two entire strangers, seated on the same sofa, breaking our hearts over poor little Daphne !

When we were calmer, I asked him if he felt he would like to explain anything to me, as I was still very much in the

dark, but so apparently was he ; he had never received any letter from her but the one I posted, and he had left by the next train and come as fast as it was possible to come ; he had no idea she had left her husband or, rather, that her husband had left her, and certainly her husband had no reason for his conduct, for there never lived a whiter, purer soul than hers. He had asked her to leave her husband, who was a drunken brute, but she had said," No" ; "and she loved me so much she felt it better we should not meet, and because I loved her, I agreed, I felt she was right. Why, because I loved her, should I drag her name through the mud ? But knowing her so well, and having loved her since she was a child, I can quite understand now from what you tell me that she felt it her duty, poor innocent child, to tell her husband she loved someone else ; that she was very sorry but could not help it ; and then he hurled cruel, wicked insinuations in her face, and finally left her. I can now see it all plainly, and the letters she wrote to me, where are they ? That confounded devil of an ayah probably destroyed them and stole the stamps, while my little girlie was waiting for me—oh, it is too, too cruel ! "

" Then—hm—then there really was nothing," I asked, " no reason why her husband should have deserted her in the cruel way he did ? "

" No reason at all, but I can quite imagine Daphne would be too pained and hurt to ever wish to go back, it would be a great shock to her to have her innocent and unnecessary confession turned into unfaithfulness. Only once did I kiss her, I lost my head one night at a dance, and she did not resist me because she then knew what I had known before, we loved passionately. This little soul, whose beautiful head only came a little above my elbow, had grit enough to say she could not regret it, but she could no longer live her life if I was always near her, so I exchanged into another regiment."

I tried to comfort him ; I said she had, I thought, all she wanted in the way of money ; and he told me she had money of her own, so was saved that trouble in addition to others.

It is so difficult to comfort people, words are so inadequate ; there is no comfort really but Time—merciful Time, bringing healing on its wings.

The bungalow where Daphne died has been added to by her lover and I believe he has endowed it ; for it is now a home of rest for mothers and sick children, and there is a Daphne ward.

I was asked to choose a text or verse to put up over the portal. I suggested :

> God looks not to see if the hands are full
> He looks to see if they are clean.

Writing of poor Daphne's death reminds me of other things taking place about the same time. I am thinking of the Afghan Boundary Commission which Sir West Ridgeway brought to a more or less satisfactory conclusion, though it proved an exceedingly difficult task, and a most unenviable one, in consequence of his having been put in charge of the Commission in midstream, so to speak, after Sir Peter Lumsden had made a hopeless mess of an extremely badly conceived and arranged programme.

Little was known of this Commission's undertakings and achievements outside official circles, but in connection with events to-day it is of interest. While speaking about it in 1885 to a big political gun, he expressed himself thus : " It is a foolish, badly thought-out undertaking " ; and so it was in many ways, leading to much humiliation for the British and one or two " regrettable incidents." Nevertheless the demarcation of the Afghan Frontier as agreed by the Commission between 1884–1888 has held good up to the present time.

There are really only two routes by which India can be approached : the open and really easy one from Herat by Sabzawar, Farah, and Girishk to Kandahar and so to Quetta, and the more difficult one which leads from the Oxus by Tashkurgahn and Ghori to the barrier of the Hindekush range, over that to Kabul, and eventually to Peshawar.

There are two main lines of railway from Russia towards Afghanistan, one the Trans-Caspian railway from the

Caspian to Panjdeh and Merv, the other the Oranburg line to Samarcand and Bokhara. These are joined by the continuation of the Trans-Caspian line which goes on from Merv across the Oxus to Bokhara. Then there is a branch line from Panjdeh to within a few marches of Herat; also, it appears, another branch I have only recently heard of from Bokhara to Termez on the Oxus.

From this it will be seen how Russia, if so inclined, or Russia controlled by Germany, has half Afghanistan entirely at her mercy.

I wish that anything I can say would awaken the folk at home to our danger in the East.

We have all had so much war that we are, out of weariness, inclined to cry peace, peace, when there is no peace; far from it.

This I tried to impress on a number of leading lights of both sexes at a brilliant symposium of a non-alcoholic nature which I held in town a few weeks ago. I could see plainly that the majority of those present considered any trouble of the nature I apprehended was on the horizon and too far away to be worth troubling about—even if it existed.

Yet, within a fortnight of that gathering, where I had foreshadowed trouble in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the Amir was murdered and Egypt in open revolt. I confess the trouble came quicker than I had expected, but I stated I was sure it was coming, just as surely as more is ahead of us of greater magnitude.

I do not think that many people who are unacquainted with India and her inhabitants have any idea of the hold that German propaganda has on the so-called educated natives. The education that in my humble opinion often proves only an acute form of mental indigestion. We like to think the countries we have conquered appreciate our efforts for their well-being and happiness, and are proportionately grateful, but no country likes being conquered; hate always lies in their hearts. We do not expect to meet with gratitude from individuals we may have benefited, why expect it from nations?

There is to-day both in India and Egypt that alarming religious unrest which history has taught us to regard with anxiety. Many curious theories are afloat concerning the Germans, and it is by no means uncommon to hear President Wilson's attitude or supposed attitude expounded in no flattering terms to this country. There seems to be a prevailing opinion that we are no longer able to stand alone, and high-sounding speeches are made about " Home Rule for India " and " Home Rule for Egypt." There has even been occasional trouble with troops, who have expressed loss of faith in us.

It was a mistake allowing Germans to remain uninterned in India or Egypt after the commencement of hostilities, for very shortly I heard of gun-running plots, Hindus being murdered by Mohammedans and so forth.

The late Amir, son of Abdul Rahman Khan, was as faithful to us as his father, and his death at the present time is unfortunate. Germany tried hard to make him less friendly to Great Britain. As late as in 1915 they sent a mission (consisting of a somewhat polyglot crowd) to the Amir with a letter, or note I believe it was called, from the German Chancellor advising him to throw off the British yoke and telling him how to do it. An Indian anarchist or two residing in Berlin at the time accompanied this mission.

None of them were able to shake the Amir's loyalty and he politely intimated to them that the British were his best friends.

When Turkey entered the war under German influence it placed the Amir in an awkward position, from which, however, he emerged with flying colours, for he was sufficiently diplomatic to send a polite message to the Viceroy in India, expressing his regret that the Ottoman Government had been so unwise.

The poor little murdered Amir was very English in his tastes, liking modern comforts of all kinds. Electric light, for instance, was installed at Kabul, which frightened the natives horribly. They thought it was some evil spirit at work, and refused to go anywhere near it. Instead of order-

ing off the heads of his subjects in the old Oriental style, the Amir only laughed ; for he was of a happy nature.

Lord Kitchener is supposed to have given the Amir his first motor-car, but this is not quite correct. He only suggested his having one, thinking it would be a pleasure to him, and on being asked which car he recommended, K. of K. mentioned one or two makers who were well known. The Amir promptly said he would have one of each ! and he paid for them himself.

I have been told many things in confidence concerning the present unrest in the East, of which I must not speak, but I would like to give one word of warning, *beware of German missionaries.* This also applies to Egypt. And does anybody know where Enver Pasha is ?

We are told all is quiet now in Cairo ; that is not in accordance with my knowledge. I hope the Egyptian police and soldiers will remain faithful and subordinate, but there has been a little trouble already and there is no limit to what may happen in any holy war, which is what the present agitation is tending towards ; and which may easily and quickly spread amongst the Arabs and on to Mussulmans in Palestine and Syria.

But I must get back to my Afghan Boundary Commission and the work done in connection with it, for we know not the hour when all the information then gained may prove of great importance.

At the beginning of the war Germany showed considerable interest in Persia until her little arrangements were knocked on the head by King George and the Czar, and her endeavours to cause strife on the Indian and Afghan frontiers ended in failure.

So far so good, but what is our position in Russia now ? World politics undergo strange changes, the friends of one generation may be the enemies of another and vice versa. Into the future we cannot see, but this is certain, the strong man armed may keep his goods in peace, but the strong man unarmed is certain sooner or later to be deprived of them.

Since the demarcation of the Afghan Boundary the world's face has changed certainly, but we know faces may change while hearts do not. Before long there will have to be a careful demarcation of frontiers and a general re-shuffle all round when the railways and routes I have been describing will no doubt be taken into serious consideration, and it will be well if we guard ourselves more effectually than we have done in the past.

The Afghan War of 1878–80 was undertaken solely to prevent Afghanistan coming under the influence of Russia; the paramount importance of the country to the rulers of India will easily be recognised when it is remembered that every land invasion of India has come by way of Afghanistan; through it alone lie the routes by which an invading army can reach the Indian plains.

Most people know this, but many think that an invasion of India through Afghanistan is in some undefined way impracticable. They think of Afghanistan as a country of extraordinary natural difficulties, populated by war-like tribes (of course all Afghans!), savage, fanatical, and with an extreme love of independence; ready to fight desperately against any invader. These ideas are not in accordance with the actual facts. The natural difficulties of Afghanistan are nothing like so great as those of Switzerland. There are no perpetual snows or great glaciers, and if there are no regular and well-made roads, many of the existing tracks could be made practicable for artillery and transport without excessive labour.

If two European armies encountered one another in the mountains of Afghanistan they would meet with difficulties far less than those successfully overcome by the Italians and Austrians in the Alps. There would be no more difficulty in making a railway from Herat to Kandahar than was found by the Italian engineers of the last generation when they made the lines through Lombardy and Venetia, the engineering obstacles in each case being of much the same nature.

What led to the appointment of the Commission was the

uneasiness caused in the seventies of last century by the doings of Russia in Central Asia, she, having absorbed Bokhara, extended her influence as far as Yarkland and conquered Khiva. She was exploring the Pamirs on the one side and had obtained a large sphere of influence in Persia on the other. From her port of Michailvosk on the Caspian she was pushing a railway south-eastwards parallel to the Persian frontier and was thus approaching Afghanistan.

Some of the stronger tribes principally " Akhal Jekkes " opposed them, when a regular campaign was undertaken under no less a person than the celebrated General Skobeloff. It ended in what was then known as " the massacre " of Gok Tapa, on which occasion the beaten Turkomans were treated in a rather Hun-like fashion.

This had a considerable effect in Central Asia, and the progress of the Russians and their railway was not further disputed. The immediate goal of the latter was the comparatively fertile tract of Merv, a famous place in ancient times, and its position makes it of considerable importance strategically. Imagine a large island a hundred and twenty miles off the north-west coast of Ireland, and you have the position of Merv with regard to Afghanistan and India.

No one with any thought for the future cared to see it permanently in the hands of a great military power who had already absorbed the most part of Central Asia.

The papers were full of Merv about this time; those who knew what they were talking about, and some who did not, went so far as to declare that it was the key of India ; others, chiefly the more ignorant, scoffed at the former, calling them alarmists and poked fun at them for their " Mervousness ! "

Diplomatic action was taken, no other being practicable, and the Russians went forward and took possession of the place, meeting with no opposition; the lesson of Gok Tapa having had effect.

Now, however, Amir Abdul Rahman became perturbed, and he informed the British Government, who controlled his foreign policy, in return for certain substantial advan-

tages, that he wished for their support. This led to a proposal to Russia that the frontier of Afghanistan should be demarcated by a joint commission. This proposal was accepted. It was hopeless to expect that the Amir and his people could protect themselves against Russian aggression in any effectual way. Moreover, the British Government was not only bound by agreement to assist the Amir to preserve the integrity of his dominion, but it was in the highest degree to their interests to do so.

The menace at that time was very real, the aims of the war party at St. Petersburg, then very powerful, were not so crude as to contemplate an immediate advance into Afghanistan, they only wished, for the time being, to obtain a footing within the natural limits of Afghanistan with a view to a railway being constructed for future uses, when the proper moment arrived.

It was probably expected that when the advance began the provinces of Herat, Afghan, Turkestan and possibly Badakhshan would fall into Russian hands without a blow. A rapid extension of the railways would permit of several hundred thousand men being transported into those provinces and maintained there without difficulty.

If a real conflict had been begun the Russians would have had the advantage on their side considering their practically inexhaustible strength of reserves compared to the scantiness of the numbers immediately available on our side, the difficulty of obtaining adequate reinforcements from home, and the little assistance to be obtained from the Afghans. The issue would have been at least doubtful. Once the Russians were masters of Afghanistan our position in India would become intolerable. Even if no actual invasion of India were attempted, the mere fact of having to maintain a really large army in the Punjab for defensive purposes would strain India's resources to the utmost, while we know well what sort of intrigues would be provoking dissatisfaction, unrest, and possibly mutiny all over the country. Skobeloff at one time talked of hurling masses of cavalry into India, but changed his mind on finding the difficulties

of transport for 150,000 men, and decided to defer his effort until the contemplated railways were completed. Nevertheless, it is quite possible that at some future time an invasion of Afghanistan on the lines indicated may be attempted, and it is on this account that I have gone into the matter.

I can now pass on to the story of the Boundary Commission which, though almost forgotten, is worth recalling for the lessons it conveys.

One afternoon in August, 1884, Sir Donald Stewart, then Commander-in-Chief in India, was riding round the big hill at Simla when he stopped a certain officer, a friend of mine (who prefers to be nameless but who is, I am glad to say, still going strong), and asked him in his dry, half-humorous way if he was prepared to start for the Baluch desert the next day. My friend, immensely astonished, his thoughts having been wandering in immediate social circles dreamily and pleasantly for some time, replied, " Yes, sir, I think so, at least I could start the day after."

" That will do," said Sir Donald, adding, " You should go and see Durand " (the Indian Foreign Secretary) " tomorrow; he will be expecting you."

The officer, still mystified, saluted and was passing on when the Chief remarked over his shoulder, " It is about this Boundary Commission, you know, you'll have to take it across the desert if you can."

About a week later the same officer found himself mounted on a camel and trotting out into the Baluch desert west of Nushki accompanied only by a Persian *munshi* (interpreter) belonging to the Quetta political agency, and three or four raggamuffin horsemen as a nominal escort. A few spare camels carried a couple of quilts to sleep on and a very slender stock of provisions. The object of the party was to discover the best route for the coming Commission and to improve or create a sufficient water supply at the camping grounds between Nushki, the last bit of fertility on the desert edge, and the Helmund river, a distance of about one hundred and ninety-five miles. To the inexperienced in

such matters that sounds depressing, but no known desert is actually without water altogether, particularly where little rocky hills arise there is certain to be water if you know where to look for it.

For several weeks my officer friend worked very hard; he pressed into his service a few wandering Baluch, and pits were dug, as many as thirty or forty in one place, in search of water, and at almost the only spot where surface water existed a really noble supply was made available.

Here lived, in a couple of wattled hovels, three or four elderly *saiads*,[1] who watched a *ziarat*[2] or shrine where infrequent travellers would stop the night and pay a few coins for water and the protection of the saint.

Before the above-named noble supply was made available there were some moments of disappointment and dismay, for the oldest *saiad* who had spoken of a water supply being at hand, when asked to point out its whereabouts, led them on their arrival in the dusk to a flat stone, saying, "Here it is." The officer and *munshi* groped under the flat stone pointed out to them as the right spot then looked at one another in dismay, for there was only about a teacupful of water and they had counted much on this place. The *munshi* (a townsman) gave way altogether, remarking that Eblis himself could not live in such a country and they had better give it up. The officer, however, pulled himself together, having met a desert or two before, and having seen a whole troop of cavalry watered from a hole no bigger than an ordinary silk hat. He therefore cross-questioned the old *saiad*, being rewarded in time by being told there was a *talas* (pond). "A *talas*," shouted the officer. "Where is it?" And was told in reply, "*Huzoor*, the sand has covered it, but the place can be found."

The three set off at once in the starlight, stumbling among the sandhills. Arriving on the top of one, their guide said, "Here it is." The place looked unlikely and the *munshi* quoted a Persian poet who seemed to have agreed with

[1] A *saiad* is a descendant of the Prophet.
[2] A *ziarat* is the burial place of a holy man.

David as to the general untruthfulness of mankind. However, the old man was right and after ten days of hard digging a pond of about ten feet by eight and two feet deep was ready for use.

Meanwhile the British Commission were assembling at Quetta. The orders received from Sir Donald Stewart by my friend had been to find a route and provide water for a body of two hundred men and three hundred animals; he was therefore somewhat dismayed when he learnt that the total number would amount to at least a thousand persons, a tremendous train of camels, and a very large number of riding and baggage animals.

The Commission itself at that moment was represented by Colonel (now Sir West Ridgeway) of the Indian Foreign Office, Assistant Commissioner in charge, three or four other political officers, a medical man, and about a dozen selected native officers. H.M's Commissioner-General, Sir Peter Lumsden, was in England and was to come out overland when the Commission had reached the scene of its labours. Attached to the Commission was a Survey Party and an Intelligence Party; the former under Major (now Sir Thomas) Holditch.

The Commission was lavishly provided with tents, bulky stores, champagne and other luxuries, or perhaps the officers provided themselves with it, at any rate, whichever it was, a caravan contractor had to provide a separate column of camels to carry it. Besides this ordinary " light " baggage the Commission loaded a train of camels at least equal to the baggage of an Indian Brigade on field service. Food and forage for the whole lot of men and beasts had to be carried for thirteen or fourteen marches of the desert journey. The water question gave some anxiety to the officer responsible for its supply. The wells that had been arranged at the halting-places had to be emptied a few hours before the arrival of each party, for if left to stand it was like the most nauseous decoction that ever issued from a druggist's shop and apt to produce certain medicinal effects; when fresh the water was slightly saline but drinkable. The

water was not the only cause of anxiety. To carry a large number of men across a desert incurs the risk of serious delay and even loss of life from people losing their way ; especially is this the case when the start from camp has to be made in darkness, as is usually the case. Troops have been known to move out in a totally wrong direction and even take the road back to where they had come from the previous day. Guides are of little use at night ; they go entirely by land marks and when they cannot see them are apt to lose their heads and way completely.

With such a heterogeneous and motley undisciplined crowd as that which followed the Commission special precautions were necessary, so my friend, the desert expert, provided against this by having fires lighted half a mile or so out of camp on the road to be taken. Every person in camp knew that in starting he was to make for the fire ; on reaching that he would see another, perhaps a couple of miles off, but plainly visible in the clear desert air. After passing the third or fourth fire it would begin to be daylight and there would be no further difficulty, as guides were at the head of each column.

Arrived at the Helmund the Commission was met by Kazi-Saad-ud-din, the Amir's *mehmandar* (guest master), who from this point was responsible for the well-being of the Commission, and therefore to a great extent controlled its movements, except when demarcation was actually going on. He arranged the stages and ordered the supplies ; this was carried out by the local officials in a very satisfactory manner. For these supplies of flour, mutton, grain and forage for horses nothing was paid.

The Indian Government was willing and anxious that the Commission should pay for what they required, but the Amir refused, partly because the Commission were his guests and also because, as he naïvely added, he paid nothing for the supplies himself !

As the stay of the Commission in the country was prolonged beyond all expectation this dictum was, I think, somewhat relaxed. Though entirely in accordance with Asiatic

principles and practice, it must have pressed heavily on the people and would not have contributed to the popularity of the British in Afghanistan or of the Amir himself.

Why the Commission should have been obliged to take this roundabout and inconvenient route through the desert to the lower Helmund and Sistan, instead of by the natural way via Kandahar and the regular caravan road to Herat, will never perhaps be clearly explained. It was the Amir's wish, and that is all that can be said about it. It rather gave the impression that he was not completely master of his own dominion, but this was not really so, Afghanistan never had, and perhaps never will, have a stronger ruler.

Keeping well away from the usual line by the express wish of the Amir, the Commission marched towards Herat, passing the vast reedy marsh known as the Lakes of Sistan, which is an ideal home for water fowl, and where once a Sistani Chief had taken a British officer out to shoot duck on one of his *tuti* (a little craft made of dried reeds) and deliberately shot him. The unfortunate man's body was hauled out of the water and hung up in a hut in its dripping clothes in the expectation that it would turn into gold. This really happened some seventy years ago.

For a long time it was thought that Herat was a place of some strength and might be held against a European enemy, but this was never really the case. The interior is not interesting, there being few buildings of importance, but a little to the north-west of the town was a great mosque called the Mosalla, built of burnt brick. One of its arches was eighty feet high, with some beautiful coloured tile-work. This fine building was destroyed by the Amir's orders at our suggestion as it stood rather near the wall, but it was a piece of quite unnecessary vandalism.

There is no natural or ethnological boundary between Herat and Persia, the frontier of which lies close at hand. From Herat the next march was to Kohsan, where a halt was made after having marched about 600 miles from Quetta. It was now the middle of November, and the weather very cold.

While in this village of Kohsan, H.M's Commissioner, General Sir Peter Lumsden, joined the Commission and took all responsibility. He had held high appointments in India and presumably possessed the confidence of the Government at home. The march was now continued through a fine sporting country until the Murghab river was reached, where they went into camp for the winter to await the arrival of the Russians, of whom there were some ominous reports, one being that General Zelenoi, the Russian Chief Commissioner, was ill and the departure of the Russian Commission had consequently been delayed. This was unpleasant, evidently things were not quite as had been expected. However, there was nothing to be done but wait, so all proceeded to make themselves as comfortable as possible.

A little pigsticking was indulged in on the way up. Pig were plentiful, and it was not difficult to get a run. To kill a boar was, however, quite another matter, as owing to the coldness of the climate they had acquired a thick coating of matted hair under their bristles, and this was so hard that the spears often failed to penetrate, consequently piggy generally escaped, while the chances of getting a horse ripped were considerable. Occasionally these animals turn savage and go for those they consider their enemies. Sir Edward Durand gave me a sketch illustrating this, he actually saw them make the charge near Tir Pul on Hari-reed, two or three boars leading the attack, the water spouting up in a semicircle from their tusks. They charged through everybody. One boar was left dead.

The Survey and Intelligence parties had been exceedingly busy, for the country was entirely unknown and quite different from what was expected, but by mid-December all activities had to be suspended.

In the meantime there were certain happenings at Panjdeh. A Russian officer, one Alikhanoff, had arrived there with an escort and held an interview or two with the Amir's representative at that place. This Russian was a rather remarkable person. He was a Caucasian, fair with reddish beard and blue eyes, but a Mohammedan ; the East

and West mingle in the Caucasus. His real name was Maksud Ali Khan, he had been educated in Russia and had distinguished himself as an officer, but had recently been in trouble and been deprived of his decorations. He was, however, still employed as a diplomat, what in India we should call a political officer.

It was reported that this individual had been rather rough with the Afghan officials at Panjdeh and had told them they must go, as all Turkoman territory belonged to the Czar, and all the Turkomans were his subjects.

The Afghan's reply to this was the despatch of regular troops to Panjdeh. At first it was thought that Alikhanoff's announcement was mere swagger, but it proved to be the deliberate policy of his Government. They aimed at annexing all territory occupied by Turkomans irrespective of other claims, and it was reported that they would not send their boundary commission until a " zone of demarcation " had been agreed upon between the British and Russian Governments.

It must be admitted we deserved this rap on the knuckles, our diplomatists should surely have satisfied themselves *before* the British Commission was sent forth that the principles on which demarcation was to be conducted were clearly understood and accepted by both sides, at least so it seems to the lay mind. At any rate, the result of this neglect was that we were met with a series of rebuffs and were made to look small and silly in the eyes of Asia.

Strange as it may seem the same mistake has been repeated in more recent times, on a smaller scale certainly, but in circumstances which might have led, and to some extent did lead, to serious trouble.

Towards the end of February, the weather having improved, Sir Peter Lumsden moved with the main body of the Commission to Gulran in Badghis, a distance of about a hundred miles. The ostensible reason for this backward movement was to get nearer to the telegraph at Mashad through which the British Commission communicated with London.

The Sariks at Panjdeh were uneasy and asked that a British officer might be sent to them as the proximity of the Russians troubled them, and they did not altogether trust the Afghan troops in their midst. The Sariks, by the way, had decided to remain aloof from the dispute regarding the Amir's title to Panjdeh.

Sir Peter accordingly sent Colonel Ridgeway to Panjdeh with several officers and a small escort, while a cavalry detachment of fifty lances was left half-way between Panjdeh and Gulran as a connecting link. If Panjdeh was Afghan then Afghanistan would have its natural desert boundary, if Russian there was no natural feature to define the frontier, which would have then to be carried to an indefinite distance to the south, perhaps to within a few marches of Herat.

To thoroughly understand the situation it would be necessary to enter into some detail of the claims of the various tribes, which are most interesting but cannot be discussed here, suffice it to say the question was found to be considerably less simple than it appeared at first sight, Solomon in all his glory would have found some difficulty to do justice to the many claims and tribes.

With regard to the Amir's right over Panjdeh, it was asserted that the Sariks had always paid a tribute to Herat in acknowledgment of the fact that their lands were included in the territory of that province, but it was not easy to prove this to people unwilling to be convinced, and against it was the fact that the Sariks had continually plundered Afghan subjects without being brought under control. It might have been possible on the basis of the removal of the Sariks to come to some arrangements if Russia had been willing, but she was not. What she wanted was not a fair delimitation along the natural lines of the country, but to gain a position that would make a good " jumping off " ground for a further advance. She wished to hold the province of Herat and Afghan-Turkistan at her mercy.

The position was not comfortable as Russia had force with which to back her demands while we had none. We

were in a false position with the great unwieldly Commission six hundred and thirty miles from the nearest British garrison, with an uncertain population at our backs.

At Panjdeh, Colonel Ridgeway enquired into the various claims on the spot and reported thereon to Sir Peter Lumsden. An officer was sent with a native surveyor to explore the country through which it was thought, or at least hoped, that the boundary would run.

The attitude of the Russians was distinctly provocative; they made demonstrations and advances which were evidently intended to tempt the Afghans into some overt act of hostility. On March 1st, however, an agreement was come to between the Government of London and St. Petersburg that no further advance should be made on either side.

In consequence of this agreement Colonel Ridgeway returned to Gulran and Captain Yates (now Colonel Yates, M.P.), one of the politicals, was left at Panjdeh. Colonel Ridgeway's report to Sir Peter Lumsden was to the effect that strong Afghan reinforcements had arrived at Panjdeh, the Russians were quiet and had made no further advance, and there was no cause for anxiety.

This sounded very satisfactory, but unfortunately the very day Colonel Ridgeway reached Gulran, believing all was quiet and well, the Russians sent a party across the Murghab and up the east bank, turning the position taken up by the Afghan troops, being firmly confronted by an Afghan detachment on that side the Russians retired. To prevent a recurrence of this manœuvre the Afghan Commander placed a post at the point where the Russians had crossed the river, they having already occupied Kizel Tapa, a mound about a mile from the actual boundary of Panjdeh. Thus the agreement of March 1st was technically broken almost at once by both sides, though the Afghans were little to blame. But worse was to follow.

At the end of the Panjdeh settlement a deep nullah comes in from the left as one looks down the valley. The hollow is perhaps fifty yards wide, and contained at that time a foot or two of water. Its clayey banks and muddy bottom

made it very difficult to cross except at one point where it was spanned by an ancient brick aqueduct formerly part of an irrigation channel. This formed a practicable bridge, but so narrow that troops would have to pass in single file.

True to their idea that troops fight best when they cannot run away, the Afghan leaders placed the whole of their infantry on the further side of the nullah where retirement was only possible by the little brick bridge.

I do not know the actual strength of either the Afghan or the Russian forces, but the former had about twelve hundred infantry with six or eight guns and some cavalry. These guns were British smooth bore, made at Cossipore in the days of John Company, their effective range being about half a mile!

The Russians had, I believe, a battalion of Turkestan Rifles (Russians), four guns and several squadrons of Cossacks under the command of General Komaroff. They were, of course, far superior in arms, equipment, discipline, and training. Being now in sufficient strength, the Russians sent an ultimatum to the Afghan's Commander desiring them to withdraw. This they refused to do. The Russians accordingly attacked on the morning of the 31st of March, 1885. The issue could never have been in doubt. The Afghan infantry were driven back into the nullah and lost heavily, at the same time the Cossacks got across the nullah higher up and drove off the Afghan cavalry. The rout was complete. The Naib Salai in command was wounded and all who could retreat did so as fast as possible, and for several marches further on.

The Russians pushed forward a strong outpost, practically occupying the whole country to which they had laid claim.

Captain Yate and his party got away with some difficulty. I have been told on reliable authority that Alikhanoff made several attempts to get the Sariks to attack his camp and offered two thousand krans (about £25) for the head of any British officer.

Here indeed was "a regrettable incident," as the diplomatists would say. Many people believed that the with-

drawal of the British Commission to Gulran, which had all the aspect of a retreat, helped to bring about this *dénouement*, that it encouraged the Russians in their aggressive inclinations.

It is true the British Commissioner was in a difficult position, being hampered by the size of the Commission in the first place, while in the second his escort, if not quite big enough to fight, might well be thought too strong to run away, but his action in encouraging the Afghans to send troops to Panjdeh, and then leaving them to fight it out with the Russians, does not commend itself to our British ideas.

It was extraordinary that Sir Peter who had been a soldier all his life should have imagined, as I suppose he did, that the Afghans were capable of making a successful defence against the Russians, but he stated this as his belief, making no secret of it. He also maintained that the Russian threat was all bluff and that Alikhanoff, or whoever was responsible, would never resort to open force with the Afghans.

It may have been bluff in the first instance and possibly a bolder attitude on the part of the British Commissioner would have averted the event which changed the whole course of the demarcation, but then we must remember Sir Peter's policy and action was approved at the time by Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone.

This affair was a severe blow for the British Commission and placed them in what might well have become a position of actual peril.

A prompt withdrawal of Captain Yate's party from the neighbourhood of Panjdeh was, of course, imperative, as much to avoid contact with the defeated Afghan soldiers as with the victorious Russians. The Survey and other parties were hurriedly called in, and all awaited further events. It was most humiliating for the Commission and its escort to have to scuttle away with its tail between its legs.

To the lay mind it appeared that there were only two courses open to the British Commissioner when he found at the beginning of February that the Russians instead of

sending a Demarcation Commission were pushing forward troops.

He might have taken up a post in front of Panjdeh with the five hundred fighting men which he had available, and told the Russians that he had come to demarcate and not to fight, but that if they meant to attack the Afghans on the grounds in dispute, they would have to do so over the bodies of the Commission and its escort. This would have been the bold course and might have succeeded. If the Russians had attacked the Commission they would have put themselves in the wrong in the eyes of Europe ; besides it is fairly certain that Russia did not want to go to war with England at that time.

The other course would have been to withdraw under protest, causing the Afghan troops to retire by short stages, and keeping the Commission always between them and the Russians, so as to prevent a collision. No blame could have been attached to the British Commissioner for yielding ground to *force majeure* while awaiting further instructions from his Government.

CHAPTER IV

An Eastern statesman—He saves the situation—A scare in London—Overtaken by a snowstorm—Sir Peter Lumsden declines to halt—Another regrettable incident—Sir Peter recalled—Colonel Ridgeway knighted—A protocol signed—Differences of opinion—A bitter winter—Cossacks' complaints—The British feed them—"Those damned Russians"—The British position as viewed by Russia—Future relations between Russia and Great Britain—Dangerous conversations—Our fleet "can do no harm"—A little "show off"—Fresh difficulties—The 1873 Agreement at fault—The Commission returns—Sir West Ridgeway at St. Petersburg—As a young man—His career—And appointments—What the tea planters say—Lady Ridgeway, her love of home—Some soup tickets—The King and Queen in Ceylon—A hospital to Lady Ridgeway's memory—Lord Londonderry (sixth Marquess) in Ireland—A beautiful Vicereine—Mr. Balfour makes a lifelong friend—A contretemps at Court—An air-raid on the East Coast—Lady Castlereagh rescues a wounded animal—Lady Londonderry's death—The Londonderry estates—Some famous relics—The founding of their industrial wealth—Queen Victoria suppresses a scandal.

THE situation was saved by the statesmanlike view of the situation taken by Amir Abdul Rahman. It so happened that on the very day of the Afghan defeat at Panjdeh the Amir arrived at Peshawar on his way to Rawal Pindi, where he was due to have a personal conference with the Viceroy (Lord Ripon) and where a State Durbar was to be held for his fitting reception.

This Eastern statesman now carried his head high and affected to regard the outrageous Russian attack as a "regrettable incident" certainly, but not one of importance, and only asked that the British Government would proceed with the demarcation as speedily as might be practicable. He also named the places which he considered it essential should be retained by Afghanistan, and these were such as might still be obtained in spite of the recent action. His attitude was reasonable and moderate, and, what was more,

his dominant personality had so completely impressed itself upon his subjects that they all without distinction accepted his decision and were no less well disposed towards the British Commission than before. And so the most embarrassing features of the situation passed away.

After this " little scrap " the demarcation was postponed *sine die* and the Commission was left stranded like a whale on a sandbank.

The scare in London was great and in India there was a partial mobilisation of the comparatively scanty forces available. Probably what saved the situation was the fact that the Russian railhead was still a long way off and so far as it was completed was not in a fit state to bear heavy traffic ; or maybe the Russians were content with having asserted themselves and with having lowered British prestige in Asia and now would carry on with " a zone of demarcation laid down according to their own ideas."

Sir Peter Lumsden now decided to move into the Herat Valley, the cavalry escort with half the Commission starting on April 3rd, crossing the Helmund by an ancient bridge, the Tir-pul, of which the roadway had mostly disappeared. It was the only bridge in the Herat Valley still standing. It has since entirely broken down ; nothing is ever repaired in that country.

The rest of the camp with Sir Peter were expected on the following morning. They did not arrive, and there was some speculation as to the cause of delay. About noon a few muleteers with their animals trailed in weary and woebegone, saying they had been overtaken by a snow-storm in the hills and that nearly all the baggage and many lives had been lost. After leaving Gulran the local people prophesied a blizzard and advised a halt, but Sir Peter did not agree ; so the march had to be continued, the snow falling faster and the wind blowing harder as they proceeded.

Again Sir Peter was approached with a view to a halt, but he would not hear of it, so they pushed on, reaching Chashma Salz about dusk. The infantry escort arrived, but the baggage guard was far behind. The camels had wisely

stayed in the pass, the drivers refusing to go any further, but the ponies and mules carrying the officers' personal belongings and those attached to the infantry were all in the road and evidently in a sad plight.

The officers and a small party of the native soldiers went out on foot to try and help them in. They found the animals scattered along the road for miles back, many of them at a standstill with their attendants lying half dead in the snow, which was very deep.

Every fallen man that could be found was hoisted on to an animal and every possible endeavour was made to bring them to the halting-place. Some were already dead, but many lives were saved by the exertions of the rescuers, who worked all night until they themselves were worn out.

At the halting-place matters were not much better; only two small tents had arrived, and there was no fire and practically no food. Several hundred persons were now collected to share the shelter of the two tents. They took it in turns irrespective of rank and colour to pack into one or other of the two little tents until partially thawed, when they went out again into the blizzard to make room for others.

The following morning the sun was shining and the storm nearly over; parties were sent out to pick up strayed and abandoned animals lying all over the country. Some of the baggage was never recovered.

The total loss of life was about twenty-five deaths and some seventy or eighty mules and ponies, poor beasts!

This easily avoidable misfortune, accompanied as it was by loss of life, did not increase the respect in which the Commission was held by the Afghan officials and doubtless the people also!

Sir Peter Lumsden was recalled. He returned to England with his two assistants and disappeared from history. So ended regrettable incident No. 2.

Colonel Ridgeway was now knighted and appointed Commissioner. The changing horses mid-stream did not do any harm to the Commission. The person to be pitied was Sir West Ridgeway who had to take up the reins and

make the best of a terrible muddle. Fortunately he is a man of great ability, self-reliance, and pluck.

All was quiescent for a while. Rumours, of course, stalked abroad not only in the camps but throughout Asia. With the advance of spring, survey and exploration were resumed, and an immense amount of work was done from Mashad in Persia in the north-west to Taiwara in the Taimain country to south-east and from the Herat Valley to the Band-i-Turkistan, comprising an area of many thousand miles. The whole country previously quite unknown to us was mapped and examined during this spring and early summer.

Not much was heard of the Russians about this time; their main force was just outside Panjdeh; towards Herat they had outposts at various places, the most advanced being at Ak Robart and Chaman-i-bed, not quite so far south as the furthest limit of their claim; while at Zulfikar on the Hari-rud they had about 1000 men including Cossacks and some guns.

Sir West Ridgeway decided to keep his camp moving for reasons of health and sanitation, and also to mitigate the plague of flies which are nearly as bad in the Herat Valley as in Egypt. After a time he divided the camps, which gave him greater liberty of movement.

August came and went, and it was a whole year since the Boundary Commission had started from Quetta, and so far nothing had been accomplished but a "regrettable incident" or two, which had lowered our prestige and made it hopeless to obtain for Afghanistan its natural desert boundary. Only the survey and exploration was to the good, and apart from that directly connected with the delimitations, the information obtained may prove of the highest value before we are much older.

The period of waiting was now nearly over, as early in September the British Commission learnt that a "protocol" had been signed and that the demarcation was to commence within two months; that would be by November 10th. This protocol was an agreement between the British and Russian Governments in which was stated the general lines

on which the boundary was to run within certain limits (the zone of demarcation).

It accorded, of course, with Russian ideas, that is, the natural boundary and Panjdeh were given up altogether. Against that, however, the three places the Amir had named as essential were all to be retained by Afghanistan. There were Zulfikar on the Hari-rud or Tajand River, Gulran in Badghis, and Maruchak on the Murghab. It took Sir West three months of diplomatic action to obtain these points, especially Zulfikar. Demarcation was to begin at this place, that being the extreme west end of the boundary. It was also understood the escorts on either side were to be limited to one hundred men ; this required the Commission being reorganised. Everyone was in high spirits. " The show " would be over by the end of the coming winter.

On November 1st the demarcation party with its escort of a hundred lances started for Zulfikar, where the Commissioners were to meet, and at last the Russian Commission arrived on the scene, sixteen officers and an escort of about a hundred Cossacks. Their Chief Commissioner was Colonel Kuhlberg. He belonged, I believe, to the Russian Engineer Corps. His assistants were Monsieur Lessar, representing the Russian Foreign Office, and Captain Gideonoff, three Cossack officers of the escort, a camp commandant, five topographers, a doctor, etc.

Colonel Kuhlberg was a cultivated man of pleasant manners, a scientist rather than a soldier. Lessar was a Montenegrin, a small dark man who was perhaps the real head of the Commission. His words often lacked the urbanity which marked those of Colonel Kuhlberg, and he had no hesitation in alluding to the force behind him when differences of view became apparent. Gideonoff was in charge of the survey. They were all easy to get on with. In social intercourse the Russians are a great contrast to the Germans. They have none of the objectionable swagger of the latter.

Both Kuhlberg and Lessar spoke English well, but none of the others, and only a few spoke French. As a rule the

British are not great linguists, but the officers on the Com mission proved themselves better in this respect than the Russians, who complimented the British on their attainments.

The first formal meeting between the Commission took place on November 11th, 1885, after which the Russians dined with the British and the British dined with the Russians, champagne was brought forth and there was much festivity. All were cheery and Panjdeh forgotten. An officer writing at that time said the camp was altogether "*en fête* and Cossack mad."

A start was promptly made with the demarcation. The Russian troops had already been withdrawn from Zulfikar and it was settled that the first pillar should be put up on the heights overlooking the river, a mile and a half below; this was a good beginning.

Perhaps I ought to explain that Zulfikar is neither a town, fort nor village, but a big ravine, which gives tolerably easy access to the elevated plateau east of the Tajand Valley. As there is no other convenient passage through the cliffs for a considerable distance up or down, the place is of some importance as a lateral communication, but apart from this, it is much thought of by the Afghans and Heratis on account of the legend which declares it to have been made by Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet, who clove the valley wall with a single stroke of his sword Zulfikar! On this account, the abandonment of the place to the Russians would have been most distasteful, and have been regarded with greater dissatisfaction than the loss of many other places of greater real value.

The agreed-on frontier having been sufficiently well laid down in the protocol, the demarcation progressed fairly rapidly at first, the exact location of the boundary pillars being easily settled.

Now I am coming to the time when there was considerable argument over the markings of the boundaries which were important at the time and equally important with a view to the near future.

By the end of December Maruchak was reached. It is

an old fort of ancient date, with a crumbling citadel long uninhabited. Here the first of the new difficulties was encountered. The natural boundary was clearly indicated at a spot about three miles below the fort where the hills close in on the river and divide the Maruchak lands from those of Panjdeh; but there is an old canal, the Band-i-Nadire, which formerly watered the Panjdeh cultivation and which when repaired would do so again.

Unluckily the head of this canal, where it takes off from the river, was exactly opposite Maruchak and it was difficult not to admit that the Sariks of Panjdeh henceforth Russian subjects had a right to the control of their principal irrigation supply.

The Russian Commission, particularly, I think, Monsieur Lessar, was anxious not only to obtain the head of the canal but a great deal more up the west bank of the river, while the Afghans were equally vehement on the other side. Sir West Ridgeway did his utmost to bring about a reasonable agreement, but no final conclusion could be arrived at, so the Commission parted at the end of December to go into winter camps, the British at Chahar Shamba while the Russians stayed on at Murghab. The personal relations between the two Commissions remained amicable. On Christmas night Sir West invited Kuhlberg and his officers to dine with him, but it was felt that the rest of the demarcation was not likely to go smoothly, especially as from Murghab onwards the wording of the protocol was vague.

The Russians laid claim to large tracts of land, little valleys with streams, high hollows with wells, the summer grazing ground of numerous flocks, all of which at the time of the Boundary Commission had been swept bare by the Panjdeh Sariks and the Turkomans of the Oxus district, the inhabitants had been robbed of their sheep and dare not show themselves anywhere, the Russians therefore asserted their right to the whole of the devastated and depopulated country.

To preserve to the subjects of the Amir even a modicum of their own lands and grazing grounds was the task before

Sir West Ridgeway and his helpers, no easy matter when the British had no force behind them to emphasise their arguments. However, there was nothing to be done but wait until the spring, when there could be a renewal of activities.

The winter proved a very severe one and the time would have passed very heavily but for the fact that there was a good deal of work to be done indoors. Most of the officers were in *khirgahs*, the felt tent of the country. Some had stoves, others built themselves fireplaces with greater or less success. In February for several days the thermometer did not rise above 15° while at night it fell to 12° or 13° below zero. Going to bed meant dressing rather than undressing. The usual procedure was to wrap themselves in big sheepskins and put on the thickest felt stockings.

Some of the much-treasured and much-travelled champagne resented the cold : the wine froze, bursting the bottles, and the precious liquid was left in solid blocks on the straw. Even in the day-time the ink froze on the fireplaces and at Mess the contents of the cruet bottles were solid !

The Cossack officers visited the camp and stayed some time. The escorts were on very friendly terms. They were Caucasian Cossacks wearing the long Caftan sheepskin head-dress, and the formidable Caucasian dagger. Every man's dress had to be of the same pattern, but beyond this much irregularity was allowed and there was a good deal of variation in material and even in colour.

The men were wiry fellows of moderate height. Looking down the line on parade they were not unlike Irish " tommies," but here and there could be seen a darker Asiatic face. These were usually Mohammedans. Though professedly irregulars, the Cossacks were evidently well-trained and disciplined soldiers.

Besides the guardless Cossack sabre they carried Berdan rifles in cloth covers with a jagged fringe, after the fashion of the pictures one sees of Red Indians. The rifles were slung across the back, the muzzle sticking up behind the left shoulder. The men were encouraged to ride after pig or any other game they might come across, firing from the

saddle. Their mounts were very useful-looking cobs about 13.3 to 14 hands with fair shoulders, good loins and back ribs, often showing more breeding than might have been expected. They could hardly be called ponies but rather little horses. Their legs and feet ,were of the best and all were unshod. These little animals seemed able to work for an indefinite time on an amount of food that would have reduced a " Waler " to skin and bone in a very short time. The Cossack saddle is high and the seat is a thick, flat pad with the stirrups hung under the middle, not forward as ours are. These saddles, I am told, are very comfortable to ride on. The rider is placed too high no doubt, but there is little fear of the animals getting sore backs from " lounging " on a long march.

When a party dismounts the ponies' heads are all tied together and so they are left. They neither kick nor bite one another nor do they try to bolt ; in fact, they are well-behaved, good little beasts.

Cossacks have no tents or luxuries of that sort, each man carries a *bourka*, a big felt cloak covering the whole person down to the heels. The officers have two *bourkas*, and that is the whole covering and camp equipment of their personnel on service. The horses have nothing.

The Cossack race, like most Slavs, is very musical. In each squadron certain men are chosen as singers, they sing part-songs on the line of march and the others join in chorus.

These singers are supposed to be especially brave, dashing fellows and to be foremost in every service of difficulty or danger.

The officers of the Cossacks were Cossacks themselves ; what in Ireland would, I think, be called " Squireens." It was rather amusing to find that they did not call themselves Russians. They used to talk of their country, "*notre cher pays la Petite Russie,*" as something quite distinct from Russia itself.

As they became acquainted with the British officers they used to complain, not without reason, of the want of consideration with which they were treated. Cossacks used to

be sent out into the empty desert as escort to the " topographers " without any provision for their food, or that of their horses, beyond what they could get for themselves and carry with them on their mounts. Often they were glad to make for the nearest British party to get something to eat.

When the Commission camps were near each other it was not an uncommon thing for a Cossack officer to go into the British mess exclaiming, " What do you think those damned Russians have been doing now ? " There would follow a tale showing how " the Russians " regarded the Cossacks as so much material, human and horseflesh, useful while it lasted, but on the conservation of which neither thought nor money need be wasted. This seemed to be the spirit prevalent in the Russian service, and not confined in its application to the Cossacks. An officer, a real Russian, not a Cossack, once said, " You have money, we have men, you expend your money, we expend our men ; in the long run the men will beat the money."

Conversation among the officers came round frequently to the future relations of England and Russia in Asia. All the officers, Russians and Cossacks alike, were invariably polite and complimentary in speaking of England and the British troops. " You fought us in the Crimea," they said, " and your men are very fine indeed, while as for the officers, the bravery of the British officer has passed into a proverb ! But excuse us for saying it, you have really no army to fight with. We are a great military nation and can put 200,000 men into Afghanistan whenever we like. You could perhaps put 50,000 and that with difficulty. Really you would have no chance."

As this was literally true no effective reply could be made. Little did Russia think at that time the day would come when she would have no army at all, as at present, while we have an army of some five million.

Occasionally during these rather dangerous conversations some one would feebly say, " But what about our fleet ? " The reply was, " Your fleet of course is splendid. You are supreme on the seas, but as you found in 1854 your fleet

can do Russia no real harm; you cannot even stop our trade, which is very largely overland both with Europe and Asia." Then they would add, "But after all, dear friend, why should we trouble ourselves, Russia and England are not going to quarrel. There is room in Asia for both of us," etc.

The trying part of it all was that the Afghan officials grasped the facts quite as well as we did. Indeed all the people of the country understood the general situation. While the individual Englishman enjoyed an astonishing prestige, much more than the individual Russian, it was commonly said that the Russians could bring two lakhs of men (200,000) against Afghanistan, while the English had less than half that number. The non-Afghan naturally thought that it would be wiser to keep in with the stronger side, while the Afghan idea was that the British Government should supply them with the best modern arms and artillery, and that *they* would keep the Russians out.

Travel opens the mind, and the British officers with the Boundary Commission had their complacent satisfaction with the power of their own country considerably shaken up during the two years they were in Central Asia.

While the Cossacks were guests in the British Camp they expressed the greatest interest in, and admiration for, the native troops of the escort. The 11th Bengal Lancers impressed them considerably. They expected to see a squadron of quite irregular horse, rather better than their own "jigits," but not as good as the ordinary Cossacks. The fine men of the native cavalry, admirably dressed and equipped, and excellently mounted, were a revelation. "And you say these are not picked men," said one Cossack officer; "why they are fit for the Emperor's guard!" A little show off was evidently considered good for the Russians and the next day the infantry had their turn. The tall sinewy Pathans of the 20th Punjab Infantry surprised the visitors. About fifty men turned out and went through an attack for their benefit, a steep hill being the objective. Arrived at the bottom bayonets were fixed and the men dashed up in a way that surprised even some of the British

officers looking on. " They sprang up like cats," remarked one of the Cossack officers, "and no doubt they would have been as quick if there had been an enemy firing from the top." " Even quicker," replied the officer in command, " our fellows do not give the enemy much time to shoot when it comes to a bayonet charge."

With the return of spring the demarcation began again, but all suffered a good deal from an unexpected blizzard which swept over the country and did much damage. The snow lay a foot deep at least and the parties who were out had a rough time. Animals died from cold and lack of food, and the Cossacks were nearly starved.

About the middle of April, when Easter fell, the British and the Russian Commissions were both at Chahar Shamba. This time is a great festival with the Russians. I shall refer later to their ritual, as it is interesting. In honour of their festival the British officers made a formal call on the Russians, which the latter returned the next day. This was followed by a big twelve o'clock luncheon in the Russian camp.

The first forty-five miles of the boundary east of the Murghab were now settled, and the Amir had expressed himself as pleased with matters as far as they had gone. Nevertheless, the Russians certainly got the best of the agreement, for instead of the boundary being drawn across the Karabel plateau giving to the Amir's subjects of the Kala Wali and Maimana districts their own pasture grounds and the wells which their fathers had dug, the line was taken across and some way down the hollows draining to the Kala Wali and Kaisar streams; so that although the people on the Afghan side retained what cultivatable land there was, they lost the best grazing grounds. For the moment this did not matter, as the Turkomans had carried off almost all their sheep, but it would keep them poor in the future, while the robbers were the permanent gainers.

By the beginning of May the Commission had left the province of Herat behind them and were well into Afghan Turkestan. They were now busy near Andkhui, a poor and unhealthy town, settling and demarcating the boundary

to within thirty miles of the Oxus, where it entered the belt of sandy desert which runs for many miles along the south bank of the big river, sometimes abutting on it in high and steep sandhills, sometimes a mile or two away, but always cutting off the alluvial plain of Afghan Turkestan from the Oxus waters. Nearly all the wells and grazing went to Russian subjects.

About the middle of June the Commission reached the Oxus at a point where it is about a mile wide but full of shifting sandbanks like the rivers of the Punjab. In rivers of this nature there is always, or nearly always, a fairly deep channel somewhere, but the difficulty is to find it, as it is constantly shifting. This and the strength of the current prevent such streams from being great natural highways like the larger rivers of Europe.

The boundary between Afghanistan and Bokhara was clearly marked by an artificial mound or bank and had been recognised by both Bokhara and Afghan officials for at least a generation. Here then one would have said is a boundary over which there can be no dispute, actually demarcated, all that the Commission have to do is to put up some posts, sign their maps and papers and turn homeward rejoicing. But no—not a bit of it. It was one year and a half before that last piece of boundary was settled, and an agreement was only reached by our giving up what had been obtained before after much argument and delay. A good deal of the trouble was caused by the agreement of 1873 which had been drawn up, at least on the British side, by people who evidently knew nothing of the locality and can have taken little interest in what they were doing.

There have been other instances of such agreements in the history of British diplomacy. That of the Alaskan boundary is a case in point.

Undoubtedly the Russian Foreign Office in 1873 were better versed in the local topography than the British diplomatists who signed the agreement, perhaps they had been quietly biding their time to spring a little surprise on the British Government. At any rate, it was impossible

to ask the Amir to surrender two-thirds of the river and district, paying a large revenue for its size, while the real boundary was well known and recognised by the neighbouring state. So once more the Afghan Frontier which had seemed so nearly accomplished came to a standstill.

The case on both sides with the necessary maps and explanations were sent to the respective Governments and there was another long wait. There was little hope that the British view would prevail. The agreement of 1873 gave away the case too completely. The Russians were bent on having a bit of territory of their own outside the Bokhara boundary whereon to place a cantonment. It was obviously to their interest to leave the boundary unsettled (and open to encroachment) rather than to accept the actual and recognised limit.

The Kilif ferry was included in this claimed country, once there had been a bridge, but it had long disappeared, like all the Oxus bridges. It is still, however, the principal crossing for traffic between Afghanistan and Bokhara. The ferry-boats are large and very heavy, and they are worked by horses; usually a pair. They are bridled but otherwise have only a surcingle. A rope goes round each horse's body over the surcingle and terminates at top in a short length of free rope, at the end of which is a loop. At the bow of the boat on each gunwale is a stout peg. The horses are driven into the water up to their middles and the loops are slipped over these pegs. A Turkoman driver in the bows flicks up the animals, who plunge forward and begin to swim. Their weight being entirely supported by the boat all they have to do is to strike out, and the boat follows. The driver guides the horses and is not sparing of the whip, for the horses, finding themselves supported, do not work any harder than they are obliged to. The boat is always carried some way down stream by the strong current. Arrived on the other side the horses walk through the shallow and slack water, pulling the boat on to the landing-place. When the load is very heavy a third and even a fourth horse is attached in the same way. A small boat can be taken across by one horse.

The Oxus is a desolate river, except the great clumsy ferry-boats at Kilif there was not a boat on it of any sort, at the time of which I am writing. There was no river traffic, not even fishing boats. At the back of the British camp were high cliffs inhabited by a large colony of choughs, the little red-beaked and red-legged crow, a few of which it is said are still to be found on the rocky Cornish coast. Their cry is rather like that of the rook but more musical and reminded the exiles on the Commission of their distant homes.

About the first week in September, Sir West Ridgeway learnt that an agreement between the British and Russian Governments for the withdrawal of the Commissions had been formulated and signed, the last piece of boundary being left undefined *for the present.*

In a few days Sir West was signing maps and papers with Kuhlberg and Lessar, and the Commission finally parted on the 13th September, 1886. The British were well on their way to Kabul by the end of September. Their route led them to the foot of the mighty Hindu Kush, that formidable range of about a hundred miles in length.

This range is crossed by some dozen or so of more or less practicable tracks, none of them exactly easy, and one cannot fail to be struck if one reads the history of the wars of Baber and Himayum by the fact that the armies of those days seem to have crossed over and back very frequently. The pass crossed by the Commission was over 13,000 feet. The crossing of the range is generally accomplished in three or four marches. On a certain spot on one of the passes not far from the summit the glen opens a little at the mouth of a lateral ravine, which is a natural camping place, but seldom used as such. It is well known as Hindu Kushtak, signifying the " Death place of the Hindu." Tradition asserts that here at a time long past an army from India perished in the snow, and this spot gives its name to the whole range.

Three or four more marches took the Commission to Kabul, well remembered by most of the officers and escort, who had

been there under quite different circumstances only six years before. This time they were entertained by the Kabul Garrison. There was a review of the Afghan troops and a formal Durbar at which the Amir made a speech. In it he emphasised what the French would call the "solidarity" of Afghanistan and the British power. Amongst the native officers with the Commission were three or four Afghans, one of them being a near relative of the Amir himself. They were all distinguished in their degree and of unimpeachable loyalty to the Government they had elected to serve. After a few days in Kabul the Commission begun their last long march of about one hundred and ninety miles to Peshawar, where they arrived on November 1st. The whole garrison was turned out to line the roads for a couple of miles before reaching cantonments. The troops presented arms, bands played "The Conquering Hero," the General and his staff were all in their glory. The whole station turned out to welcome the returned wanderers.

Everything possible was done to honour the Commission and to give its return the aspect of a triumph, which no doubt was right and politic, though the measure of success it had attained was not really very triumphant. Perhaps it was felt necessary to rejoice that matters were no worse!

All now dispersed, some back to their posts, others home. Sir West Ridgeway started for England at once to rejoin his pretty wife and little daughter, both of whom he found down with scarlet fever in Lowndes Square, and he was not allowed to see them until he had made his salaam to Queen Victoria at Windsor.

Although the great Boundary Commission had come to an end, the demarcation had not, but the Government were anxious to get the matter finally closed. It was arranged that a conference should take place at St. Petersburg (not then called Petrograd), and in March, 1887, negotiations were resumed. Sir West Ridgeway was deputed by the British Government. The conference ended in a compromise, which is interesting but would take too long if entered

into in detail, but which may at any moment be of the utmost importance.

And so ends the story of the Russo-Afghan boundary for the *present.* Sir West signed the final agreement at St. Petersburg giving the Sariks of Panjdeh (now Russian subjects) all the land that could possibly be claimed for them and the entire possession of the channels by which these lands were irrigated. This certainly eliminated various possible causes of friction, and this was regarded, not unjustly perhaps, as some set-off against the abandonment of so much territory.

Looking back at the demarcated boundary as a whole it is obvious that it is entirely wanting in one essential, the element of permanence. It is entirely indefensible. Whether after the occupation of Merv by Russia and having regard to all the circumstances of the case any possible boundary would have been to any great degree stronger than the present it is useless now to enquire. The fact remains that half Afghanistan is at the mercy of the possible enemy. Nor can any application of military force imaginable at the present moment adequately provide for its protection. This is a discomfiting truth and far as Central Asia is now from the public mind it should not be entirely forgotten.

Geographically the boundary is purely artificial. It is marked by no natural features and is as complicated as any boundary between two rural estates dovetailing into each other. Ethnographically it certainly does divide the Turkomen from the Herati, Afghan and Usbeg subjects of the Amir of Kabul. But this might have been obtained by turning out the Sarik interlopers and preserving the natural, simple, and, to a certain degree, safer boundary of the desert.

While recognising the defects of the boundary, no possible blame can be attached to those responsible for the actual demarcation, for Sir West Ridgeway and his assistants grappled manfully with a most difficult and dispiriting task requiring endless patience and diplomatic skill. The fault lay with the Government of the day in thrusting out the Commission into the wilderness without a clear understand-

ing as to the general lie of the boundary they were expected to demarcate.

The second great mistake seems to have lain in directing the Afghan authorities to send troops and guns to Panjdeh as if the boundary was to be settled by military means. For this Sir Peter Lumsden was responsible.

It is to be hoped that when the inevitable adjustment of frontiers takes place after Peace is signed the mistakes of 1873 and 1884 will be avoided.

No matter how completely Germany and Austria may be defeated in this war the Prussian poison has penetrated too deeply into the German mind to be eradicated by even severe reverses. No real Frenchman ever gave up the idea of the *revanche* against Germany, and no real German will ever give up the idea of retaliation against his present enemies, especially against England. If Russia finally crystallises into a cluster of independent or semi-independent states, Germany from her geographical position and inherited advantages will certainly have at least as much influence in these separate entities as she has had heretofore in Russia as a whole, and probably much more so. This influence will be directed against England commercially, politically and militarily. What better or safer way of harassing England than by egging on Russia to penetrate into Afghanistan ?

When that moment arrives few men will be found with so accurate a knowledge of the country as Sir West Ridgeway, who is a clever man with a very retentive memory and is a diplomatist to his finger tips, with a wonderful record of a busy and eventful life.

When first I knew him he was Captain Ridgeway, a young man full of ambition and unswerving purpose. He meant to make a name for himself and quickly did so, beginning with his appointment as Political Secretary to Lord Roberts in 1879–80, and did good work for him throughout the Afghan War. Following this, he became Under-Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department and took Sir Peter Lumsden's place in Her

THE RIGHT HON. SIR J. WEST RIDGEWAY WHEN UNDER-SECRETARY FOR IRELAND

Majesty's Commission for fixing the Afghan Frontier about which I have been writing; after which he was sent to St. Petersburg on special diplomatic duty, and for the final signing and sealing of the Boundary Agreement.

After the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish he was sent to Ireland as Under-Secretary, and I knew he was going before he knew it himself; at least I knew it was going to be offered to him. This was during the time Mr. A. J. Balfour was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the Londonderrys were at the Viceregal Lodge, which was rather curious as the first Earl of Londonderry about 1565 was Sir Thomas Ridgeway, from whom the present Sir West Ridgeway is descended.

In 1892 when Ireland was a little more tranquil, Sir West was sent as Envoy Extraordinary to the Sultan of Morocco, expecting to return to Ireland when he had accomplished his task, but instead of this he was made Governor of the Isle of Man in 1893, and remained there until 1895. From there he went to Ceylon, being appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief, and to this day he is there spoken of as "the most popular Governor Ceylon has ever seen." The tea planters tell me his name is still a tradition in that island.

In 1906 he was appointed Chairman of Committee of Constitution Enquiry of Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, since which time he has devoted his energies to business in the City. He is a man of too active a brain to be idle. Lady Ridgeway, who was my sister, was a very pretty woman but rather delicate. Had she been able to choose her own mode of life she would never have left England, being a very stay-at-home person and loving the comforts of life. She always dreaded leaving the old country, but was a devoted wife and very proud of her husband, taking a great interest and pleasure in helping him with his work.

Having a nice little fortune of her own she was able to help materially, as well as with her gentle tact, for it is a recognised fact that these Governorships though they sound

as if the remuneration was satisfactory, seldom cover, by a long way, the expenses involved in entertaining, etc. Such a number of people are sent out from home with introductions, or what I call " soup tickets," which means the Governor and his wife have to entertain them. I always think that though she had every good thing of this world lavished on her, and the tender love of her husband and daughter, the strain of constant entertaining and the amount of thought required to make everything work smoothly told upon her health.

After the visit of our present King and Queen to them in Ceylon she wrote to me that she was always feeling tired, and she never spared herself. The sick always appealed to her, as they do to all who know what ill-health means ; she was a constant visitor amongst them, and after she died in 1907 a hospital was built and endowed to her memory by the people of Ceylon.

She left one daughter, the present Mrs. Edward Tollemache, whose husband in the Coldstream Guards has seen much service during the Great War.

Writing of the Londonderrys recalls many memories of that family. The late Lady Theresa Londonderry was a beautiful, dignified, clever and versatile woman, interested in all things and clever at most. At the time her husband was Lieutenant-Governor of Ireland she was in the zenith of her beauty and was a popular vicereine, though the time they went to the Viceregal Lodge was not an inviting moment, for the Land Leaguers, Parnellites, and a fair sprinkling of English Liberals had set themselves the task of making the Government of Ireland under the Union a difficult if not impossible undertaking.

At all times a keen politician and full of interest in life she set herself steadily to work in support of Mr. Balfour, at that time Chief Secretary for Ireland, and he found in her a real helpmate. Several of her characteristics appealed to the Irish. First and foremost she was a sportswoman, and the Irish love a sportsman or sportswoman. They also love wit and a good-tempered argument, in both of which

LADY WEST RIDGEWAY

she excelled. Although a strong Conservative of the old school, she could argue well and wittily with a red-hot Radical without becoming in the least ruffled. She knew what she was talking about, and, owing to her tact and foresight, her opinions carried some weight.

As a hostess she was great, whether in her own house or her Court, and nobody knew better how to maintain the dignity of the latter. At times perhaps she was a trifle imperious. But one of the truest friends man or woman ever had if she liked them.

Her sense of humour made her an entertaining companion and she enjoyed telling a story against herself, which is not a common characteristic.

Here is one over which she always laughed :

After having as the Queen's representative received the curtseys of hundreds attending her courts and at times having been amused at some of the curious exhibitions made by the nervous, or those unaccustomed to the art of making Court curtseys and retiring gracefully crab fashion, she, when in Dublin, in the usual course of events, went to make her curtsey to Lady Zetland who had succeeded her. To her horror for some unaccountable reason when she entered the room and stood where so many had curtsied to her, she had a sort of side-slip at the crucial moment when she swooped gracefully to the ground, and losing her balance sat down abruptly—altogether a most undignified obeisance !

Another of her stories, but not against herself this time :

A young and devoted newly married couple were staying at a certain seaside place on the East Coast when an air raid occurred in the middle of the night. They dared not strike a light and the husband jumped out of bed and began scrambling into his clothes telling his wife to make haste, do the same and follow him into the cellar. The husband quickly dressed and made his exit, his wife feverishly searched for her garments, but could not find all she wanted. Presently the anxious husband returned and implored her to make haste and come into safety. She explained there

was nothing she would like better, but unfortunately she could not find her combinations. He said, "Never mind, come without them," and she did.

When the raid was over and the glass and chimney pots had ceased flying about, another lengthy search (this time by daylight) was made for the missing garment, but it was never found until—her husband undressed!

She was a plucky woman. I remember staying at Wynyard when a child, soon after she married Lord Castlereagh. We children were playing hide-and-seek in the grounds and she came and joined us. While hiding we came upon an unfortunate cat in a trap amongst the bushes. It was caught by the leg and though looking horribly draggled and exhausted, it commenced going round and round like a Catherine-wheel when it saw us.

Calling to our governess, who was standing in a path near, to bring her umbrella that she was carrying, Lady Castlereagh at once armed with this weapon of defence proceeded to try and get her foot upon the trap and release the cat.

It is never an easy matter to liberate an animal from a trap owing to their fright, struggles and pain. Even a pet in its anguish will turn on one; cats have less understanding in these matters than dogs, they always seem to think you have come to make matters worse instead of better.

Our governess tearfully implored Lady Castlereagh to come away, for if the cat bit and scratched her she would surely go mad. No notice was taken of this, but opening the umbrella very gently and quietly she held it in front of her but low on the ground so as to prevent the cat swinging round, and, putting her foot on the trap, the poor little animal was set free, it hobbled away on three legs. We then went for milk to try and entice her cat to come and be taken care of, but when we returned she was nowhere to be seen.

I remember the then reigning Lady Londonderry, grandmother of the present Marquis, being very angry at the trap having been set, as they were forbidden in the grounds.

After Lady Castlereagh became Lady Londonderry her

Photo by Lafayette, Dublin

THE LATE THERESA, MARCHIONESS OF LONDONDERRY,
IN HER CORONATION ROBES

parties in Park Lane were amongst the chief events of the season. She was a favourite with our Royalties and they often stayed with her and Lord Londonderry in Yorkshire.

Her gaiety and brightness were infectious, the way she would keep a room full of deadly political foes happy and amused was a lesson in tact.

I think at one time she found a little difficulty in casting the mantle of exclusiveness that was *de rigueur* when first she began entertaining, but she was in no way snobbish.

Latterly she made friends amongst all classes. Without ever being ill-natured she had a happy knack of taking off people's little peculiarities, in a way nobody resented. She was too full of interests to be petty. Her infectious gaiety and enjoyment of life were very pleasing. She loved society and interesting people: and she loved piloting herself alone in her little yacht at Mount Stewart on the water amongst the little islands.

Her knowledge of racing and horse-breeding was exceptional. When at the beginning of the war the Government thought all racing and horse-breeding should be suspended *sine die* and a number of the racing fraternity though grumbling amongst themselves took it lying down, not so Lady Londonderry, she bitterly resented it, and spoke strongly on the subject at Tattersalls. Her arguments were logical and sound. She was a fluent speaker and an omnivorous reader, loving books of all sorts and kinds, most kind and appreciative to me over mine, saying how she enjoyed them and telling me to "Make haste and write another."

I had arranged last December to write her own reminiscences, and she was going to help me with some dates and facts I wanted concerning her son's and her late husband's industrial interests, for another book I am writing; she was keen about both and shortly before she died telegraphed, "Do come Lumley Castle Wednesday 19th to discuss plans." A little later she thought it would be better not to publish her reminiscences until after her death: little thinking, either of us, how soon that was to be. For, as all

the world knows, she died after only a few days' illness on Sunday morning, March the 23rd, 1919. Society has lost a great leader and those she cared for a loyal friend.

She was exceedingly proud of, and devoted to her son, the present Marquis, and during his absence at the front, where, with the Household Cavalry, he has been doing his bit, his mother attended most ably to his business interests, as well as everything connected with his racing stable.

The Irish estates of the Londonderrys are in Ulster, and the late Lord Londonderry, husband of Theresa, was a strong opponent to the inclusion of Ulster in the Home Rule Bill. I think the favourite home of the Londonderrys was Wynyard Park, and I am not surprised, for in the first place it is the ancestral home, and stands in beautiful grounds. The avenue is long and the park well and nobly timbered. On the north front of the house is the main entrance, which is covered by a portico of lofty and massive Corinthian columns. The entrance hall is large and lofty and the roof is supported by marble columns. Passing through a very fine doorway with jasper pilasters and Corinthian cornices the statuary gallery is reached which used to impress me so much when a child. It is one hundred and twenty feet long, eighty feet wide and sixty-four feet high. Round the walls of this gallery, where we used to play hide-and-seek, are forty-eight columns of jasper, at the base of each being some fine piece of statuary representing classical and mythological subjects, as well as marble busts of the Vane-Tempest-Stewart family and their distinguished friends. From this gallery open out different suites of rooms. In the dining-room are some of the finest of the family portraits. Specially interesting is the handsome medieval room dedicated to the memory of Charles William Vane, third Marquis of Londonderry. It is fitted with cases containing his medals, military and civil honours. Here also is the historical table on which the great transactions of 1814 and 1815 were arranged, and on which the Treaties of Vienna and Paris were signed by the plenipotentiaries of the Congress of Vienna, which gave peace to Europe. The

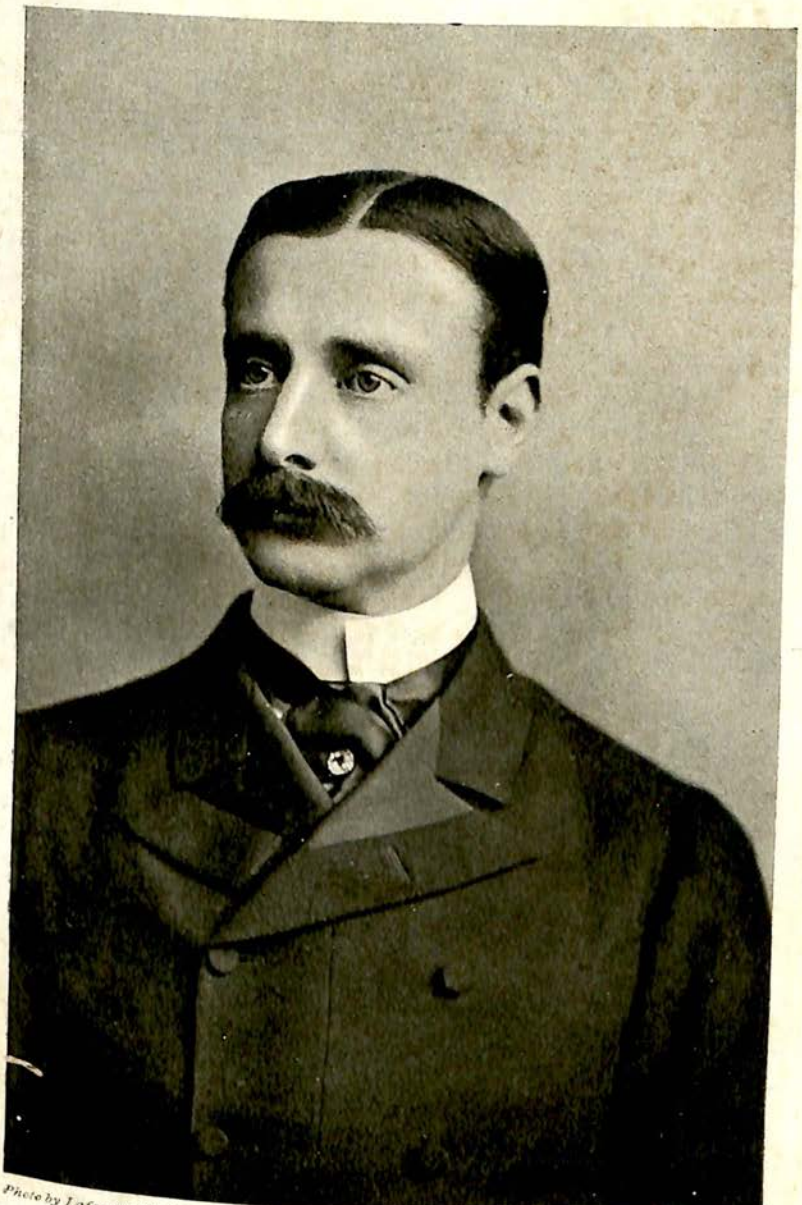


Photo by Lafayette, Dublin

THE LATE LORD LONDONDERRY, 6TH MARQUESS

inkstand used on these occasions is also there. Amongst a number of other interesting things is the trowel with which the third Marquis laid the foundation-stone of Seaham Harbour, and the spade with which he cut the first sod of the railway between Seaham and Sunderland.

The view from the terrace on the south side of the house is charming, overlooking a fine lake crossed by an artistic and dainty suspension bridge which stands between the house and a fine old grassy park studded with grand old trees. The park is surrounded by miles of plantations and woods, well peopled by small birds and game. I have also seen an occasional wild deer there.

The list of famous persons' signatures in the family visitors' book is legion, and an hour or two passes quickly before half have been studied. Royalties of all sorts and kinds, the Duke of Wellington, Louis Napoleon Emperor of the French, and more recently Sir Robert Peel, Disraeli, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Sir Edward Carson and countless others.

Wynyard stands midway between Darlington and Stockton-on-Tees. It came into the Londonderry family through the alliance of Frances Anne Vane Tempest with Charles William Lord Stewart, subsequently third Marquis of Londonderry and first Earl Vane. The branch of the Vane family from which Frances Anne Lady Stewart sprang settled at Longnewton, half-way between Darlington and Stockton, in the 17th century. The first of the Vanes to settle there was Sir George, second surviving son of Sir Henry Vane the elder, of Fairlawn and Hadlow in Kent, and of Raby Castle in Durham County, who was Secretary of State to King Charles the First.

Henry Vane the younger was brother to Sir George Vane, and was M.P. for Hull in 1670. He took an active part against the Loyalists, but he displeased Cromwell and was sent in disgrace to Carisbrooke Castle. He afterwards tried to found a Republican form of Government, but after the Restoration he was executed on Tower Hill. He has been described as " one of the greatest and purest men that ever walked the earth."

This was the character of the brother of Sir George Vane of Longnewton and ancestor of the great-grandmother of the present Marquis of Londonderry.

The Frances Anne of whom I have been writing was Countess of Antrim in her own right. She married in 1819 Charles William Lord Stewart, a man of remarkable character. He was Adjutant-General to the Duke of Wellington and was a brave and brilliant soldier, probably the most brilliant cavalry officer of the day, but when he laid down his sword he became one of the greatest pioneers of industrial enterprise in the North of England.

He founded the town and docks of Seaham Harbour, a huge undertaking for one man. He also opened and developed large colliery undertakings in Durham County which belonged to his wife.

She ably seconded him in his bold commercial enterprises, and thus started the business side of the Londonderry fortunes.

The Londonderrys own 50,000 acres, much of it carrying an industrial population. The late Lady Londonderry took great interest in the welfare of all the workers. It is difficult to appreciate the unique position of the Londonderry family in the North-East without having lived up there. The influence they carry is enormous and their generosity is traditional.

The grandmother of the present Lord Londonderry was a great favourite of Queen Victoria's, and once when there seemed every likelihood of a great scandal in a well-known family more or less mixed up with the Court, the Queen sent her favourite to say she hoped that no steps would be taken that would be painful to her as she would be much annoyed.

Dear old Lady Londonderry tried to hush everything up and succeeded in avoiding an open scandal, at any rate; I remember she was horribly scandalised herself over the disclosures that came to her ears. She was a good woman with a particularly nice mind.

CHAPTER V

The Russians at home—Surprising customs—Bathroom scenes—And etiquettes—Fresh air charged for in the bill—A nourishing smell—Ritual during Easter festival—The Tsarevitch cries—His illness—A little known medical fact—Seething discontent—Every Russian an anarchist—Prince Yousupoff at Oxford—His motor-car—Bulldogs and parrots—Fêted in Petrograd—Peter the Great's gold ducats—His reforms wise and unwise—His statue at Petrograd—His so-called will—" The Polish Question "—Bismarck's fear of Polish women—Frederick the Great admires them—Poland's artistic temperament—No middle classes—No half-measures—A loathing of trade.

THE Russians are interesting people and I have been surprised to find how little many educated folk know of what I call the domestic side of their lives and the part they have played in the drama we call life. It is like a wondrous fairy-tale.

A friend when talking to me a short time ago said, " Tell me some more about the everyday life of the Russians. You interest me. I always looked upon them as morbid savages." I suggested, if she had any spare time a little study of Russian history would be a good beginning; she replied, " Oh, I know all they tell me in the standard works on Russia, all about Peter the Great, Catherine and politics, that is not what I want to hear about, but just the everyday happenings of which you have been speaking."

And when I told another friend of mine who has held an important position in Russia for a number of years that I was writing a little about that country in a book, he remarked, " Bear in mind that everything you say will be flatly contradicted by someone who is convinced he knows more about Russia than you do. I find a number of people who have never been in the country know much more about the Russian mode of life, their hopes and fears than I do,

who have lived in the country for years, speaking their language as well as my own, and, in consequence of my work, in constant and intimate touch with them."

I felt a little depressed, but forewarned is forearmed and I am buckling on my armour.

Some of the things I have lately read in books written by Russians about themselves have surprised me. In one I find the announcement that the late Prince Alexis Dolgorouki married a Miss Fleetwood Seymour or some such name. The lady happens to be a friend of mine and her maiden name was Miss Fleetwood Wilson. In another book written by a Russian, or a man who also evidently knows Russia well, says, that the peasants seldom put on clean clothes after their weekly bath. This is not in accordance with my knowledge of the Russian peasant. I should have said that they habitually carried a small bundle with them containing a change of linen and a clean handkerchief to put over their heads after bathing.

There are many customs in Russia that are surprising to new-comers in that land. One of the most surprising to the English mind being their system of cleansing themselves, there is a very marked difference between their ideas of decency and ours. Bathrooms in private houses or apartments are not a common practice, are, in fact, regarded as rather extravagant luxuries; while to put on a bathing dress would be regarded as a sure sign that there was something abnormal to conceal.

All, both young and old, go to public baths for a scrub once a week; there are grades of baths ranging from first class to fourth class, much after the fashion of our public baths in London and elsewhere, only in the Russian baths there is no sort of privacy.

A general dressing or undressing room is provided, from which all emerge perfectly naked and enter the hot bath-room enveloped in clouds of steam. Here all sit on sort of shelves with a gently sloping floor, while buckets of water are thrown over them, and all in turn are well scrubbed by an equally naked old woman with a scrubbing-brush.

There is no opportunity of sitting in a nice warm bath, it being considered a very dirty trick to wash in standing water.

Some very quaint scenes may be witnessed in these baths. A stately old lady when last seen outside all pompadour and brocades enters the bathroom amidst the splashing and steam. A little stripling of say sixteen comes in, recognises her friend of the brocades and makes her a nude little curtsey. It all seems so like a nightmare, and unreal.

A little friend of mine having tried the higher-grade baths, thought she would like to sample the fourth class, she was heartily welcomed and asked to " come and wash again " with them.

The shelves in these bathrooms rise higher and higher and of course become hotter and hotter, this seems to quite upset some people's mental balance, and they end in whipping themselves with birch rods, becoming really a form of vice.

The picture of one of these bathrooms packed with all sorts and sizes of naked human beings, some sitting on perches being scrubbed by naked old women, others higher up beating themselves for pleasure, all enveloped in clouds of steam, is most weird, more like Dante's Inferno than anything else one can think of.

It is the work of the Council that there are proper baths in villages, isolation hospitals, etc., and not the work of the Government.

Another thing that strikes one as unusual on arrival in Russia is that they do not make their beds in the morning the way we do. All the bed-clothes are folded up and put away until required again at night. Meanwhile the bed has a day-time drapery.

In winter, windows are sealed up, and if any visitor hiring apartments, or staying in hotels, wishes for fresh air they are made to pay for it in the bill, the eccentricity of wanting fresh air is not to be encouraged. And when the windows are fastened up for the winter, allowing no chink to ventilate the room, having the windows opened causes considerable annoyance.

Drainage is conspicuous by its absence. The poor people throw everything they want to get rid of outside their door; tea leaves, vegetable refuse and greasy odds and ends from their cooking all hobnob together in heaps. When frozen in winter, this is all very well, but in the spring the smell is overpowering and pestilential. I was told once it was " very nourishing " !

Like the birds, the Russians make love in the spring, but are unlike them in the date of their weddings, for the Russians do not marry until the autumn; when there is much feasting lasting for three days, usually accompanied with a good deal of drinking. They have no half-way house like our registry offices. Everything is done in the most orthodox manner.

They are a pleasure-loving people, with them it is wine, woman, and song, but they are very particular about their religious observances. On their railway stations altars are to be found with lighted tapers, and services being held amidst all the hurly-burly and hurry of travel. Indeed, they are held on all sorts of occasions, such as opening a school, christening an engine and such like things. All men remove their hats when passing a church and every house possesses an ikon. Russians have been known to refuse to enter a house that did not own one. Every Russian possesses an ikon or icon as it is sometimes spelt, the proper pronunciation being as if spelt with two e's, thus eekon the accent on the first two letters.

The religion of these people is a very real part of their lives, their faith, or perhaps I should say the official religion of the majority is that of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Eastern and Catholic Churches separated in the ninth century, the Russian Church then in its infancy followed its patriarch, Pholinos of Constantinople. The doctrine of the Eastern Church is much the same as the Catholic except for the Papal Infallibility and the Filioque clause of the Nicene Creed, but their rites are different; they have no organs in their churches, the singing is quite unaccompanied and very beautiful—their services are attractive

and associated with a good deal of ritual and gorgeous vestments. The priests are the least attractive part, they wear long hair, long robes and are mostly dirty. But there are exceptions: the chaplain, for example, of the Anglo-Russian Hospital in Petrograd, an ex-guardsman, good-looking, tall, clean and impressive. It is most unusual to find an ex-guardsman in that capacity, as the priesthood generally runs in families and they intermarry keeping up an ever-running sort of coterie emphasising their peculiarities.

The Easter midnight service is full of dignity and stateliness; once witnessed not readily forgotten. All who attend it wear their best bibs and tuckers, full evening dress, diamonds, etc., arriving in opera cloaks and usually leaving them at the door until the service is over. Two hours is the average time this service takes, and the congregations stand, each holding a lighted candle from the beginning to the end of the service. It is the custom to carry the candle home if possible without its going out, for if that is achieved it is supposed to secure them a happy year.

Another curious custom during the Easter service is that as soon as the priest announces "Christ is risen," and the response "He is indeed risen" is given, then all present kiss one another three times in honour of the Trinity. Indeed during the whole of Eastertide it is quite customary for perfect strangers to kiss one another saying, "Christ is risen."

This same Easter midnight service takes place in the Russian church in Welbeck Street; all attend in full evening dress, the women wear neither hats nor veils, and all hold the lighted candle already described.

People who are unacquainted with these Russian rites and ceremonies might feel surprised when returning from some party in the early morning if they met some of these devout people endeavouring to keep a naked candle alight in their hands, might even be inclined to judge them harshly, also if a stranger walked up to them, kissed them three times and said, "Christ is risen."

The Russian marriage service is also interesting, though

trying for the best man and chief bridesmaid, as it is part of their duty to hold a heavy metal crown, the property of the church, over the heads of the pair being united and, as they process round the church; it is tiring and an office not to be lightly undertaken even in moments of effusive friendship.

The Russian considers the man who is not orthodox is not a Russian; with them all must be one of two things, orthodox or heathen.

The community in Russia is divided into peasants, citizens and nobles—officers rank as nobles. To our English way of thinking a peasant means a country labouring man, but in Russia a peasant may be anything from a smart young man with scented handkerchiefs and long hair to a daily labourer.

It is superstition and ignorance that have kept the people slaves for so long, but they are awakening, though possibly still betwixt waking and sleeping, that hour when we see things we cannot grasp, but war unmasks the souls of men.

I think the individual that was the most to be pitied of the Russian Royal Family before the Revolution, was the poor little Tsarevitch; all the mischief in Russia seemed to circle round that tragic youth's head; he had to suffer for the mistakes and sins of many, in fact, he was the thumb-screw by which the Court intriguers coerced his parents.

Just before the Revolution the poor youth was observed to be crying and his grand uncle Nicholas asked the reason, receiving the reply, "It is so sad at home now, if the Germans have a victory father cries, and if the Russians have a success mother cries."

Perhaps the Revolution is the best thing that could have happened for him.

The majority of people know the Tsarevitch was very delicate, and that it was in consequence of this that Rasputin, that prince of spies, obtained such a footing in the Royal household, for he professed to be able to cure the boy's malady. That is old history now, and probably a number of people know that the illness from which the

Tsarevitch suffered is hæmophilia—a tendency to excessive bleeding—a not uncommon complaint.

We often hear of boys having their teeth out and there being difficulty in stopping the bleeding, where there is this tendency even a slight cut on a finger may prove fatal. I believe this is hereditary, but have not been able to trace it back any distance in the Tsarevitch case. But there is one very curious feature about this hæmophilia which is little known except to scientific medical men, namely, it is never transmitted from the male side, but always through the female, though she herself never suffered from it. That is to say a man may marry and have children, say a girl and a boy. The boy marries and his children do not suffer from this bleeding. The girl marries, she does not suffer from it, but her son does.

There is only one drug known at present, I believe, that stops the bleeding—with luck! That is to say, if anything will arrest the flow, it is calcium chloride.

That Rasputin had a useful knowledge of drugs and their properties may account for some of his miraculous cures.

It has always seemed to me that the wonderment of the whole story was, not that there was anything very astonishing about the " holy man " but rather the disgraceful state of Russian society, corrupt, intriguing and depraved ; had the atmosphere been different about the Court and the aristocracy, a coarse-minded, coarse-tongued, illiterate charlatan would never for a moment have been tolerated. It was high time they were all swept away. A good spring cleaning was necessary beyond all doubt.

We are all sick to death of Rasputin, but a friend who has been for years in Russia amused me not long ago with a story of the man. It appears that the spy occasionally dined not wisely but too well, when he was apt to give away some of his horrible and disgusting secrets. Once he went to a Russian priest and told him the Virgin Mary had appeared to him in the night telling him certain things were going to happen within a given time, I forget what the certain thing was but remember it had something to do

with the Tsarevitch. The priest listened with apparent interest, then said in reply :

" Really ! how strange ; I also had a visit from the Virgin Mary last night, she appeared to me and said, ' If you see that rascal Rasputin anywhere about, kick him.' "

The " holy man " did not wait for this assistance to his movements.

The man had a curious trick of being able to dilate the pupils of his eyes at pleasure. It was most uncanny. I dislike all these freakish things. I once knew a man who could make his ears go up and down without any visible effort, and another the scalp of his head.

I wish they would not—the wind might change one day while doing it, as our nurses used to tell us might happen, when we were children, and we were making faces. They would be sorry then, for so they would have to remain for the rest of their lives—at least, so our nurse said.

In a leading magazine I read very shortly before the Revolution that such a thing was impossible in Russia, and giving as one reason for having arrived at this conclusion that " the Army would never allow it." These wiseacres must have been unable to read " the writing on the wall " ; for it was an open secret before the war that a revolution was inevitable, the only question being whether it should take place before the Armageddon or after.

Anyone staying or travelling in Russia must have been struck with the seething discontent discernible everywhere, and to the observant it was a matter of wonderment that all had held together for so long. Soldiers openly expressed hatred of their officers and at times refused even to salute them, indeed, if we may believe what we are told on good authority, some of the most unpopular officers were put out of the way.

There was a certain faction who greatly admired German disciplinary methods, and so far from the Army preventing a Revolution it has been a military climax.

There had been for long grave dissatisfaction over the Court appointments, many being in the hands of Germans

which could and should have been filled by Russian patriots.

It was no use the Russians with great loyal hearts writing and expressing the belief that the Tsar was greatly beloved by the people; he may have been once; but for long he was hated and regarded as a weak fool entirely under the influence of his unpopular German wife, she in turn being under the influence of that disgusting individual Rasputin, who was in the pay of the Germans.

The people naturally became exasperated, resenting the undoubted influence of the Tsaritza over her husband; for instance, if the Duma were holding a debate of which the Empress did not approve, or the subjects under discussion were not being handled to her satisfaction, she made the Tsar have the doors closed and the assembly dismissed —protest being useless.

In most countries there are no doubt a certain number of anarchists, but *every* Russian is at heart an anarchist. There is anarchy everywhere, it is in the atmosphere.

The Rasputin affair is almost forgotten now, but many English people were surprised on hearing that handsome and charming Prince Felix Yousupoff, otherwise known as Count Soumarokoff-Elston, was implicated with the Grand Duke Paolovitch in the murder, or "execution" I believe they called it, of Rasputin.

It seems incredible that Prince Yousupoff, who had been educated in England at one of our public schools and at Oxford, speaking our language perfectly and with all the finishing touches and polish of our present-day civilisation, should have been if not the actual murderer, at any rate an accessory.

The Prince is a very handsome man, tall, well set up, brown-haired, blue-eyed, and clean-shaven. He gave pleasant little parties when at Oxford. A friend of mine who went on the stage and used to dance with Madame Pavlova accompanied that lady to luncheon with him when at the University; the chief impressions left on her mind were the Prince's good looks, and the number of bulldogs

and parrots in his rooms. The car in which he drove his guests was most luxurious, amongst other unusual fittings there was a bed!

Yousupoff is not a Royal Prince, but by courtesy, and he is one of the richest men in Russia, owning many houses and estates.

When last I heard of him he was in mufti in Petrograd, this was an unusual sight, I doubt if many people in Russia possess such a thing, uniform being almost universal, even little boys wear it in some form.

The night after Rasputin met his death Prince Yousupoff was in Petrograd being carried shoulder high, cheered and pelted with flowers by way of congratulation for having released Russia from the machinations of the rascal.

Petrograd, the official capital of Russia, is quite unlike Moscow; the latter is a commercial town, the former is full of handsome government buildings painted quaintly in yellow and black. The Admiralty, where the Duma sat, has a wonderful fine delicate spire fairly high and curiously glittering. Few people know that this brilliancy is caused by gilding of real gold made from melted ducats brought from Holland by that remarkable self-made, self-taught man Peter the Great, whose love for, and teaching of, the simple life still lives amongst the peasants to-day, though perhaps they do not eat with their fingers as their great ruler did!

Peter was great in many ways, but he was not always wise, at least looking at some of his reforms we can clearly see how they have been instrumental in the discontent which has led to the present chaos; he it was who stocked Russia with Germans. He greatly admired their methods and enterprise, being especially interested in their scientific agriculture; thinking it would be good for his people to progress in this direction, he invited some, and engaged others, to come to Russia with the view of teaching the peasants, and explaining the use of their labour-saving machinery, etc.

The Germans came, settled themselves comfortably and

remained as farmers, the Russians working for them, but learning nothing more than they could pick up for themselves; the new arrivals keeping almost exclusively to themselves. These farmers remained Germans at heart and named their settlements with such appellations as Lustdorp, Lidienthal, etc., keeping up all German customs and institutions as well as intermarrying with colonists and emigrants of their own nationality.

This reform is bearing fruit to-day. It did not take the Germans long to see in the undeveloped country plenty of scope for industrious foreigners.

Another of Peter the Great's unwise reforms was making St. Petersburg into the capital of the country. It was a most unpopular move, not being sufficiently central, so many people thought. Another reason that made it unpopular being that St. Petersburg is built on the marshes and most unhealthy. The poor people who mostly live in underground rooms are frequently flooded out. It is interesting to note how quickly the Germans realised this. Before very long they had the entire monopoly of the drug trade, every chemist's shop was in the hands of Germans and owned by them. So firmly did they establish themselves that when some Poles ventured to start rival establishments, the law and fire-arms were requisitioned to settle who should remain. Of course the Germans won the day, Court sympathy being on their side.

Petrograd was a wonderful sight during the early days of the Revolution. The winter palace is no longer occupied by either Royalties or Rasputin, but by the revolutionary army.

There is an air of spaciousness in the city, and life there before the war was one of gaiety, music, cafés and restaurants, the latter full of people all charming and hospitable. Almost every nationality could be met there.

Impressive buildings abound. The Nevski, which is three miles long and thirty feet wide, has many of the administrative buildings around it. A number of quays form a sort of circle round a good part of the city along the banks of the

Neva. The Admiralty dockyard is in what is called the English quay near the War Office and British Consulate. Close to the Grand Duke Nicholas' palace are the Military Courts of Justice. A little further along the river front stand the forty-four feet long, twenty-two feet wide and twenty-seven feet high statue of Peter the Great. Then comes the world-famed enormous palace of the late Tsar, magnificent outside, uncomfortable and almost sordid within.

The British Embassy is a fine building and impressive as becomes the abode of Great Britain's representative, but what to me is much more interesting is a little wooden hut or shanty just across the water, in which place Peter the Great planned and dreamed of the building of the city we call Petrograd to-day. This little wooden structure has been preserved in its original simplicity, a relic of the past. Here Peter, not at that time called Great, sat with his wife, who mended his clothes and attended to other domestic matters and allowed her lord to eat with his fingers. Truly wonderful—this great city founded and built under the orders of an uneducated man, who hated ceremony in any form, was regardless of all traditions, and so homely he felt out of place in Moscow.

The man was a genius with the usual accompanying temper. Yet one could hardly call a man clever who deliberately set to work to build a city on marshes that moved to suit their own convenience when they felt so inclined. St. Petersburg was built against all the orders of nature, if I may so express it, and in consequence was a most costly undertaking both in lives and money.

To-day an enormous concrete parade-ground stretches over what was open marsh. A clever practical ruler would never have spent incalculable sums of money and a hundred thousand lives in an endeavour to build a city on a vast stretch of marshland.

Before the building of St. Petersburg, Peter travelled in many countries endeavouring to gather knowledge for future use. At one time he served as a private soldier, at

another he worked as a labourer in England, at Rotherhithe, with other ordinary labourers, studying deeply all the time. When he returned to build St. Petersburg he took with him a number of engineers, sailors, etc., to assist him in carrying out his schemes. He made the army and the system of canals by which the Neva was united with the Volga to the Caspian.

The will of this man is an interesting document. I think it might more correctly be termed the advice of Peter the Great, rather than his will; unless that is the peculiar form Royalties take when making their wills, pre-supposing, of course, they have anything to leave.

Reading this so-called will of 1725 in conjunction with the happenings of to-day is both interesting and instructive —it provides food for thought and runs as follows :—

"(i.) Neglect nothing which can introduce European manners and customs into Russia, and with this object gain the co-operation of the various Courts and especially the learned men of Europe, by means of interesting speculations, by philanthropic and philosophical principles, or by any other suitable means.

(ii.) Maintain the State in a condition of perpetual war, in order that the troops may be inured to warfare, and so that the whole nation may always be kept in training and ready to march at the first signal.

(iii.) Extend our dominions by every means on the north along the Baltic, as well as towards the south along the shores of the Black Sea; and for this purpose:

(iv.) Excite the jealousy of England, Denmark and Brandenburg against the Swedes, by means of which these Powers will disregard any encroachment we may make on that State, and which will end by subjugating.

(v.) Interest the House of Austria in the expulsion of the Turk from Europe, and under this pretext maintain a permanent army and establish dockyards on the shores of the Black Sea, and thus, by ever moving forward, we will eventually reach Constantinople.

(vi.) Keep up the state of anarchy in Poland, influence

the national assemblies, and above all regulate the election of its kings, split it up on every occasion that presents itself, and finally subjugate it.

(vii.) Enter into a close alliance with England, and maintain direct relations with her by means of a good commercial treaty; allow her even to exercise a certain monopoly in the interior of the State, so that a good understanding may be by degrees established between the English merchants and sailors and ours, who on their part are in favour of everything which tends to perfect and strengthen the Russian Navy, by aid of which it is necessary to at once strive for mastery over the Baltic and in the Black Sea—the keystone on which the speedy success of the scheme depends.

(viii.) Bear in mind that the commerce of India is the commerce of the world, and that he who can exclusively command it, is dictator of Europe. No occasion should therefore be lost to provoke war with Persia, to hasten its decay, to advance on the Persian Gulf and then to endeavour to re-establish the ancient trade of the Levant through Syria.

(ix.) Always interfere by force of arms or by intrigue in the quarrels of the European Powers, and especially in those of Germany; and with this object:

(x.) Seek after and maintain an alliance with Austria, encourage her in her favourite idea of national predominance, profit by the slightest ascendency gained over her to entangle her in disastrous war, so that she may be gradually weakened; even help her sometimes; but incessantly stir up against her the enmity of the whole of Europe, but particularly of Germany, by rousing the jealousy and distrust of the German princes.

(xi.) Always select wives for Russian princes from among the German princesses, so that by this multiplying alliance based on close relationships and mutual interest, we will increase our influence over the Empire.

(xii.) Make use of the power of the Church over the disunited and schismatical Greeks who are scattered over

Hungary, Turkey and the southern parts of Poland, gain them over by every possible means, pose as their portectors, and establish a claim to religious supremacy over them.

Under this pretext and with their help Turkey will be conquered, and Poland, unable any longer to stand alone, either by its own strength or by means of political connections, will voluntarily place itself in subjection to us.

(xiii.) From that time every moment will be precious to us. All our batteries must be secretly prepared to strike the great blow, and so that they can strike with such order, precision and rapidity as to give Europe no time for preparation.

The first step will be to propose very secretly and with the greatest circumspection, first to the Court of Versailles and then to that of Vienna, to divide with one of them the Empire of the world; and by mentioning that Russia is virtually ruler of the Eastern world, and has nothing to gain but the title, this will probably not arouse their suspicions.

It is undoubted that this project cannot fail to please them, and war will be kindled between them which will soon become general, both on account of the connections and widespread relationship between these two rival Courts and natural enemies, and because of the interest which will compel the other powers of Europe to take part in the struggle.

(xiv.) In the midst of this general discord, Russia will be asked to help, first by one and then another of the belligerent powers; and having hesitated long enough to give them time to exhaust themselves, and to enable her to assemble her own armies, she will at last appear to decide in favour of the house of Austria, and while she pushes her irregular troops forward to the Rhine, she will at once follow them up with the hordes of Asia; and as they advance into Germany, two large fleets filled with a portion of the same hordes must set sail, one from the sea of Azoff and the other from the port of Archangel under convoy of the war vessels from the Black Sea and Baltic. They will suddenly appear in the Mediterranean and Northern Ocean, and inundate

Italy, Spain, and France with their fiery and rapacious nomads who will plunder a portion of the inhabitants, carry off others into slavery to re-people the deserts of Silesia and render the remainder incapable of escaping from our yoke.

All these distractions will accord such great opportunities to the regular troops that they will be able to act with a degree of energy and precision which will ensure the subjugation of the rest of Europe."

This " will," as it is called, sets forth fairly clearly Napoleon's policy, but whether it came from the heart of Peter the Great, or the brain of Napoleon, it has been the policy pursued by Russia.

In Catherine II's reign towards its close there was a great fuss and pow-pow about invading India but it fell through. Also in 1801 the Emperor Paul agreed with France to invade India; the Cossacks had actually started when the death of the Tsar knocked it on the head.

Considering how many have designs on India it behoves us to keep our eyes open and to be prepared, and I think some of the grumblers who are always saying how mistaken our policy has been in not concentrating all our troops in the Western front, must have lost sight of the grave necessity of keeping open our road to India; where should we be without the free passage of the Suez Canal for instance? Sending troops to Egypt, Mesopotamia, Salonika and elsewhere may have appeared madness, but there was method in it.

While keeping one interested eye on India I keep the other equally interested eye on Poland. The Polish question has been the skeleton in the cupboard of all the Chancellories of Europe for well over a hundred years, and is of such importance that its future, whatever it may be, must inevitably have its effect on the lives of us all; it is, in fact, vital to all Europeans. The Polish problem has often been referred to by politicians and leader writers under the name of " The Polish question," yet few people in England really know what it is all about, as is often the case in connection

with big problems or events which gradually become mere phrases to the ear. Take, for instance, the Monroe Doctrine or the Renaissance. If you were suddenly to ask someone what the Renaissance was, the reply would quite likely be that it was something they had eaten at the Savoy but they did not know what it was made of.

Only the other day—historically speaking—Poland was a great and powerful nation, our bulwark against all comers from the East, at one time sole champion of Christendom against the Turks; but now an object of profound sympathy throughout western Europe. But though she has ceased to have a separate political existence each individual remains a Pole and resistant. The dream of their nights and days, the dream of every Pole, is to see their land arise on the ashes of the past, stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

Polish women have done much to keep alive the love of their country, they impress upon their children from their earliest days that country must come before anything, indeed the Polish women are great factors in their country. Bismarck once said he would sooner have two regiments of hussars opposed to him than one Polish woman, and Frederick the Great admired them and their qualities, saying, " In Poland the women attend to politics while the men get drunk ! "

It is one of the greatest of European tragedies that there is now no such thing as a Polish nation, yet it is with Poland's future, after this war, that everyone is concerned, yes, everyone, even the London shopkeeper and the country labourer, for on the condition in which Poland finds herself after the war will spell our victory or defeat. This may seem strange to some, but so it is, and the Government of every great nation knows it.

If it had been the fate of Poland to be turned into an ostensibly independent state, yet practically under the economic and political sway of Prussia, then Britain and her Allies with the whole ancient edifice of Western civilisation would suffer. On the other hand, if a really free Poland

emerges with free access to the sea through the ports that once were hers, then Western civilisation has been saved and the Prussian dream of an all-powerful middle European empire cannot be realised.

What led to Poland's downfall was the artistic temperament, which almost invariably leads to disaster and catastrophe; and they certainly brought their troubles on their own heads in a measure, much of it being caused by want of cohesion between the classes; they had no shock-absorbing middle class, and no nation can get on without one. There were nobles and peasants, the former were rich, proud and futile, while the peasants were dull. A middle class is a half-measure and Poles do not deal in half-measures. If they drink, they drink to excess, if they are clever they are brilliant and play like Paderewski, or act like Modjeska or discover things like Copernicus; if they are dull—they are hopelessly dull. A Polish writer in describing the national temperament of his countrymen marvelled at the way a German can speculate as to whether life is really worth living, and write volumes proving conclusively that it is not —nevertheless go on living and drinking beer, marrying and all the rest of it just like other people. The Pole if he thought as the German did would plunge into the debauchery of despair, and probably die of delirium tremens; poor soul, he is artistic and imaginative.

Tracing Polish history back through modern times it disappears into a welter of legends. To this day the Pole lives in a sort of Nibelungen Ring of legend.

An inborn loathing of trade has been one of Poland's stumbling-blocks; they prefer leaving it to Jews, Germans and Scotch folk. To this day the Polish aristocracy dislike anything in the shape of barter or sale of goods.

Needless to say Germany saw her opportunity, the commercial education came in, and won, hands down. The Pole is a gentleman and brave, ready to fight if needs be, but he could never bring himself to fight after modern fashion, the throwing of high explosives and abominable smells at one another across ten miles of country does not

appeal to him, he would much prefer a straightforward personal encounter.

I like to remember the Poles received the Jews when all the rest of the Christian world would have none of them.

Many people are sick to death of Russia and Russians and wish to hear no more about her in consequence of her having thrown us over and prolonging this titanic struggle, but she interests me greatly and there are so many possibilities in connection with her in the future that I think it might be well if we knew more of her, her people and their lives.

CHAPTER VI

The Russian ballet visits England—Golders Green becomes fashionable—Russian domestics—Shopping difficulties—Madame Pavlova and her company tour in America—Pavlova's simplicity a trial to her managers—Mordkin works the sewing-machine—Temporary home in a train—Publicity-agents' enterprise—Patience of American audiences—"Gad, what a small stage!"—Pavlova's maids—Their work and affection—Pavlova mends her shoes—Her pet alligator—A prize-fight between Mordkin and Pavlova—The Bishop cleans the boots—Hotels clean and unclean—The alligator in an hotel—Until the bill was paid!—A motor-car in flames—The late Tsar's loves—Some arrests—Corruption grows apace—A baby boycotted—Chocolate and water in a bottle—An interpreter for Russian commissioners—A Russian officer's diplomacy—With the Red Cross in Russia.

THE arrival of the Russian ballet in this country caused a great sensation, all were well received, though I heard some strange and unflattering remarks made about their modes and manners.

For some reason, best known to themselves, Golders Green is where these fashionable dancers congregated; quite a little colony of Russians collected there. The great Madame Pavlova took a house next door to Madame Lydia Kyasht, and their Russian servants were most entertaining, being unable to speak English their endeavours to make themselves understood were dramatic. On one occasion a Russian cook went to a local Golders Green butcher with a basket on her arm in search of pork, she pointed to a piece of beef, shook her head and grunted a few life-like grunts in copy of a pig. Pork was forthcoming at once and the cook returned triumphant.

Another Russian servant wished to find the underground railway and asked a policeman to direct her. At first he had no idea what she was talking about, but when she ran along the street crying pouf-pouf and moving her arm after

the fashion of the cylinder on the wheels, he guessed at once.

The reason why these foreign servants get on so well on our shores is, I think, because they are so natural and devoid of self-consciousness; it never occurs to them they may be looking ridiculous.

A friend of mine who had taken up dancing went with Madame Pavlova on a tour in America to dance with her company. As this friend does not wish me to mention her name I will call her Helen. She is a gifted little person, and a great linguist. She learnt Russian " for fun " as we used to say when we were children, and taught herself entirely. She felt sorry for some Polish girls who went out with them as part of the ballet, for on their arrival at New York they were seized with home-sickness, and one of them spent her leisure moments weeping on the bedroom floor in the hotel. Fortunately there were not many leisure moments, as rehearsals began early, and often ended late, sometimes after 1 a.m.

Happily there was a delightful restaurant near the Hotel Schuyler, where Helen was staying owing to its being fairly near the Metropolitan Opera House where the rehearsals took place.

The restaurant in question rejoiced in the name of " Childs." Excellent and cheap meals were procurable here at any hour of the day or night, a decided improvement on our English restaurants. I wish we had a " Childs " over here open at all hours of the day or night. Whatever the Americans undertake they do thoroughly—no half-hearted measures.

About twenty American girls had been engaged to travel with the company as *corps de ballet* and they were amazed at seeing Madame Pavlova go into " Childs " for supper. One girl remarked, " An American star wouldn't be seen in ' Childs ' if you offered her diamonds in *cups*."

One of Madame Pavlova's most fascinating traits is her simplicity, natural simplicity which is perpetually showing itself. In New York she was installed at the Knickerbocker

Hotel, where life cost about a pound a minute, yet she spent the whole day and half the night in the theatre and would turn into " Childs " with the ballet girls quite naturally for a cup of coffee. Occasionally she would be too busy to leave the theatre to feed, her maid then carried food to her from the " delicatessen " shops, and she shared it with Monsieur Mordkin while discussing ballets and costumes.

This very simplicity was, however, a great trial to her managers for she never could be made to see the difference between a human being and a star. Instead of reclining on a panther skin surrounded by orchids and smoking cigarettes out of diamond-studded holders, they would find her sitting on a high stool at a luncheon counter eating ham and drinking coffee with the rest of the world.

Some of the Russians' methods were a revelation to Helen, for instance, it was surprising to find Monsieur Mordkin seated at a sewing-machine making his own costume.

Like all the rest of the garments in which the company were to appear in the Oriental ballet in New York, Mordkin's had come from a first-class Paris house of considerable fame, but the costume did not please him, so he was adapting it to his own ideas.

Shortly after this Helen went to see Mordkin's wife who was ill, and was now not in the least surprised to find him seated cross-legged on the bed sewing jewels on his theatrical head-dress. He certainly knew what he was about and showed considerable taste, as in the ballet he looked a most magnificent Oriental potentate.

It must be rather delightful to travel with a theatrical company ; in the first place they do themselves very well, and in the second, as a rule, they are a joyous crowd.

Madame Pavlova's company in this American tour travelled in their own train, living in it for weeks and months. In one car were the Russian Count Centanini, the impresario, and Mr. Theodore Steel the conductor, in another coach the American girls, always for some mysterious reasons called by the Russians *Ilalianki*, in another coach

the musicians, in another the scenery, and so on, making a goodly crowd.

It was all very comfortable, but not altogether as described by the publicity-agent. According to him they had a luxurious library, a beautifully fitted chapel with a priest of the Orthodox Church in attendance; he may have been there in spirit, but he certainly was not in the flesh.

Journalistic enterprise and imagination is often responsible for good stories; the following is an illustration. The Russian dancers and company arrived in New York at 8 o'clock in the morning and all went quickly to bed. Before long Helen was aroused from her slumbers by a perfect stranger who wished to know what "snow" was in Russian. Drowsily she murmured "snieck" and went to sleep again. That evening there appeared in the local paper a wonderful description of the rapture of the Russians on arriving to find snow on the ground, how they had rushed madly about scraping up snow in their hands, exclaiming joyfully, "Snieck, snieck!"

That one word of Helen's had worked these wonders. As a matter of fact she and the rest of the company had slept soundly until midday as usual, and were by no means pleased to see snow on the ground.

The conductor of the car was a "coloured gentleman" with much experience of ladies holding "Stellar" rank! His views on people and things were entertaining. He regarded Madame Pavlova's simplicity from another standpoint, entirely different to that of her managers; this is how he expressed himself: "For a lady commanding the notoriety she does, Madame is very little cranky."

To this discerning coloured gentleman named George, with his dark skin, kind heart, and perfect manners, the company owed much of the comfort of that tour; they gratefully remember his gentle ministrations.

American audiences are very patient. In consequence of the number of entertainments given on "One night stands," sometimes three being given to the one night's halt, the company were sometimes late. At one depot

they arrived an hour after the curtain should have risen and the performance began two hours and a half late, no protests being made by the patient folk waiting.

With this Russian company, as with all travelling companies, their first remark on arrival at a theatre was, " *What* a small stage. Are there any letters ? "

This appeared to have got on the nerves of some theatrical authorities who thought they would save the Russian dancers this trouble when they arrived at their destination. A large printed notice was found hung up at the entrance of the theatre, " Gad, what a small stage ! Where's the mail ? " This so tickled Pavlova that she exclaimed, " Gad, what a small town ! Where is Centanini ? "

Madame Pavlova's two maids who always travel with her are worthy of some notice, being of uncommon character and very hard workers. The general public have little idea of the amount of work entailed on all connected with the production of theatrical entertainments. These maids thought nothing of working all night if necessary and ate their meals when and where they could, belonging to, or perhaps I had better say, a remnant of the old school who took personal interest in their employers. They were, of course, Russians. Nastia was the name of her personal maid and dresser. Shura, the other maid who was in charge of the wardrobe, making costumes and keeping them in repair. If in a town for more than one night, or if hot water happened to be laid on in the theatre, Nastia would seize the opportunity to wash, dye and iron tights. The room had a curious appearance with about twenty-four pairs of these articles hanging from lines. Pavlova is always exquisitely fresh and dainty on the stage involving an immense amount of work with tarlatan skirts, tights, etc. Her ballet shoes are her own particular care ; she is most particular about them, and spends much time preparing and repairing them herself. A new pair is generally torn to pieces, little scraps inserted, parts pared away with a penknife, and such like tools ; her hands at times become quite rough with this work which she will entrust to no one.

Sometimes four or five new costumes would be required at two days' notice. Shura working as if her life depended on it in the train. Surrounded by billowing tarlatan and doing most intricate embroidery with papers of sandwiches and sequins beside her.

The relationship between the maids and their mistress was interesting. Shura was a great critic administering blame or praise (unasked) quite freely ; she was overheard one day telling Pavlova she had " held her back admirably in some dance." There was a pleasant give and take on both sides.

If annoyed Pavlova would slap the maid's faces and this was in no way resented ; another time if she was dining in some restaurant and there happened to be a dish or two she thought the maids would like she would send for the head waiter and ask for a large piece of white paper in which she would wrap up the dainties and carry them off to the maids in the theatre.

Eccentricity when wedded to great achievements is easily forgiven, and the almost fraternal relations between them was rather charming. If it happened to be convenient the maids would sit and sup at the same table as Pavlova and her party without any embarrassment on either side.

On returning to London after this tour an old friend of Pavlova's arrived from Petrograd to see her ; the moment Nastia beheld him she flung her arms round him, administering warm kisses, the embrace being heartily returned. An old friend of Pavlova's must naturally be a friend of Nastia's.

I wonder how long these pleasant relations will last under the new regime ?

Chesterton says, " It is a really democratic thing to kick your butler downstairs if he annoys you, the undemocratic thing is not to do it. So perhaps ——"

In New Orleans, Pavlova acquired a small alligator about one foot long which became a great pet, but the negro portion in the car were terrified of it.

The run to San Francisco being a long one a whole evening had to be spent in the train, and a most amusing one it proved to be; for Pavlova and Mordkin undertook to entertain the rest of the company, and succeeded admirably.

The first item on the programme was a prize-fight between the champion heavy-weight and the champion light-weight, the latter being Madame Pavlova attired in one of Mordkin's vests with a magnificent display of " Orders " pinned on.

Mordkin as heavy-weight had numerous pairs of stockings and other objects arranged under his sweater to represent muscles and an enormous red rubber sponge fastened on as a beard. A small towel was placed on the floor as a mat, and the fight proceeded. It is beyond me to describe this great moment, I must leave it to the imagination of my readers.

An amazingly clever sketch followed by Mr. Mordkin depicting Madame Pavlova in old age, followed by one of Mordkin in his second childhood by Pavlova.

It is of course well known that encounters between these two artists have not always been quite so amiable as the one just described or so amusing—especially to their managers. But of their wonderful partnership—" *Horas non numero nisi serenas.*"

The independence and equality of the American domestics is surprising to our English minds on visiting that country for the first time. A friend of mine staying in an hotel in New York put her boots outside the bedroom door to be cleaned, they were still there next morning, but not cleaned. Another individual staying in the hotel better versed in the ways of those parts asked what her boots were doing outside the door ? " To be cleaned," was the reply. My friend was much laughed at and told she would have to do that herself, the servants would not dream of doing it, so the boots were withdrawn. This reminds me of an English bishop who went out to America to stay with another bishop friend, and as usual put his boots outside the door imagining they would be cleaned; indeed, I am not sure he was not turning over in his own mind the scramble there would be in the lower

MADAME PAVLOVA AND MONSIEUR MORDKIN
From a picture by Michel Jacobs

regions for the honour of cleaning his boots. What happened was this :

The host bishop espying his friend's boots as he passed the door on the way to bed felt rather concerned. What should he do ? He could not possibly knock at his friend's door and tell him to clean his own boots, neither could he leave them there dirty until the morning ; and it would be worse than useless to tell the servants to clean them. What was to be done ? He really must have a notice put up in the bedrooms after the fashion of some of the hotels where there are placards, or what my little son in his ignorance called blackguards, bearing this notice : " Gentlemen will not, and others must not, spit upon the floors." Now perhaps if he put up a notice in the rooms, " Gentlemen will not, and others must not, put their boots outside the doors," it might be a good plan, but being of a logical turn of mind he felt he should offer some alternative or suggest some means of having clean boots. It was altogether very ruffling and in despair he picked up the boots, stole away with them, cleaned them himself and stealthily, like a thief in his own house, popped them down outside the door again.

The company spent Christmas in New York. They danced for seven weeks at the Metropolitan Opera House. Christmas day was as dreary as only Christmas day knows how to be when spent in an hotel. Pavlova dined with Helen and her mother, a gloomy meal in a deserted room, after which they retired and drank tea in their private apartments. Now, everything bore a different complexion, for Pavlova talked unceasingly while the others listened entranced, to her stories of her childhood, of some of her great moments and some of what often proved the more important, the little moments, which later may and often do arise collectively to make or mar us.

Some of the American hotels were most comfortable and beautifully clean, others were neither comfortable nor clean.

In one where Helen and her mother had bespoken rooms, on arrival they found so many occupants already there that they could not face it ; this they explained to the

chambermaid saying black beetles were their pet abhorrence and they observed several strolling about. The maid suggested that was nothing to make a fuss about, but seeing the occupants of the room preparing for flight she rang the telephone and called for " the Boss " or his understudy. Presumably one or the other answered from the lower regions, for the maid continued with the nasal twang peculiar to Americans, " Say, Boss ! these parties in 77's making tracks 'cos of the beetles, send instructions quick ! "

Once on board ship when several repulsive-looking beetles were discovered under Helen's pillow she sent for the steward and remonstrated. He was quite pained with her for not wishing to have them left there explaining, " Lor, Miss, they eats the bugs," and picking up the beetles dropped them into his pocket for use in his own bunk !

There was a good deal of excitement on the return journey from America owing to the risk of enemy submarines, torpedoes and aircraft. All the passengers crew were daily drilled with a view to teaching all those on board what to do should necessity arise. The alarm was given and all had to fall into allotted places with life-belts and other saving appliances. Boats were lowered and manned ; everything carefully thought out and arranged.

To the lay mind it seems quite possible that when the alarm was sounded it would be difficult to know if it was for practice or the real thing, but I suppose if all answered the alarm promptly and did as they had been instructed it would not matter much which it was.

There was one very pessimistic passenger who was rather a trial, he would insist on predicting disaster and used to walk round the ship explaining to anybody who would listen to him that the drill was all very well, but if there was any hurry and real danger this boat would not be sea-worthy, that something else would not work and so on, until it got on some of the passengers' nerves and worried the captain ; he therefore suppressed the croaking individual.

In April the company arrived in England ready for the Palace season again. All were glad to be back in London,

which Russians seem to like and feel at home in. They greatly appreciate the civility of our policemen, porters, tradesmen, every one in fact.

Madame Pavlova engaged a delightful suite of rooms in an hotel overlooking the Park; having done this she thought she would like to be in Golders Green again and took a house there, leaving the alligator in sole possession of the charming suite of rooms in the hotel for a week! having no money to pay the bill she said. Her salary was £300 a week!

At this time Golders Green was full of Russians and interesting people, amongst them Pavlova, Lydia Kyasht, Fokine Chirriaieff, Bara de Guersberg, the Kisloff and Lydia Lipkowska. A number of Diagheliew's ballet also had rooms there.

The majority of Russians consider our food unpardonably nasty, but Madame Chirriaieff became so enamoured of our tea she continued to have it sent to her from Golders Green to Russia.

When dancing at the Palace Pavlova used to take Helen away with her for week-ends travelling by car. On one of these journeys they started away after the performance, taking food with them to eat on the way.

Near Sevenoaks something went wrong with the car, which was a new one and therefore annoying that there should be trouble with it. They got out, walked a little distance and sat down to enjoy their provisions while the necessary repairs were being attended to. Shortly to their horror they discovered the car in flames. Pavlova was much agitated, as she had only just signed the insurance policy and was uncertain whether it had been posted or not. Looking round for some means of extinguishing the flames she discovered a gravel pit, and with her usual resourcefulness dashed off and filled her hat with gravel, carrying it backwards and forwards hoping by this means to put out the fire. As the flames neared the petrol tank the chauffeur said it was no longer safe for his mistress to stay anywhere near the car, and it had to be abandoned. There was nothing

to be done but walk into Sevenoaks; they arrived in the middle of the night at an hotel where eventually they succeeded in knocking some one up who gave them tea and made them comfortable for the night.

Pavlova was, and is, a wonderful woman, the English raved about her when she was over here. She is an artist to her finger-tips, with the true artistic temperament, irritable and impatient with people less gifted and quick to grasp things than herself. She is not unduly vain, at least not more than is consistent with brains and self-respect, for vanity is only a perverted form of self-respect.

I think it must have been during Pavlova's last season at the Alhambra when Helen as usual was dancing with her, that the gifted and hospitable actress gave a large garden party in Ivy House, Hampstead, which she was renting at the time and where she was surrounded by her pets, a lovely garden, and Russian servants.

Amongst these pets were some beautiful swans who disported themselves on a miniature lake.

Invitations to the garden party were much sought after; it was largely attended and all seem to have enjoyed it. Mrs. Asquith wrote and said she would bring her own chair if she might come. Helen lent Pavlova some of the family plate to look smart for the occasion, and to fill up some cupboards with glass doors. The furniture and beautiful things had come from Russia, but Pavlova had not brought much silver.

Other people knew of this party apparently as well as the invited guests, for it was discovered next morning that burglars had been busy, but contented themselves upstairs amongst the jewellery, overlooking the cabinets and elsewhere.

I feel that all this account of successful dancers sounds very easy of imitation and a delightful life, but all are not born dancers and all temperaments are not suited to life on the stage, as the following will show.

A very nice girl, well born and what, I believe, is called "well brought up," presented at Court, and having passed

the usual curriculum expected of the " well brought up," wished to test life on lines of her own unaided by anyone, wished to stand alone without any props, wished to earn her own living, disliked the idea of being a parasite and living on anybody. She thought the world a beautiful place and full of nice people. If it proved otherwise, well, she would make it beautiful and the people nice.

At first there were some self-satisfying days. She was admired and sought after—then followed days of doubt and some regret, wondering if the game had been worth the candle, and thinking of the way she had disappointed her people ; also some loss of faith in men and things, followed by loss of faith in self—then disgust and despair—disillusion —suicide—while yet a young and beautiful woman. It had not taken her long to find " All is not gold that glitters," and that the walls of convention are after all very protecting.

I feel this little story sounds rather like Sunday tracts for simple people, or some such thing ; but it is true and presents to our minds clearly that all are not suited to the life of the stage or to standing alone.

Amongst other Russian dancers who have created sensations in England were Lydia Kyasht and Karsavina; they were close friends, having been at school together, made their debut in the same year, became *première danseuse* the same year, married the same year and subsequently came to England the same year.

Madame Kyasht's husband, an officer in the Russian Army, managed to escape in November, 1917, from his country, at that time in a state of chaos. His pass was made out by the Kerensky Administration for which he had been fighting, but the Leninites having been in power for a few days he determined to try and get away and come to his wife who was in this country. Captain Rogosin, for that is his proper name, is a well-built man of about six feet, he had many thrilling adventures during his escape. That he did good service before he left is proved by his having won the Cross of St. George, which is the Russian Victoria

Cross, and also the gold sword of St. George. The Cross was bestowed upon him for capturing some heavy guns from the Germans with only fifty men of his company.

Before he left he saw desperate sights in the streets of Petrograd, thousands of dying and dead, both civilians and soldiers, and the Winter Palace riddled with bullet-holes and ransacked.

Then there was Kshesiska, who worked like a galley slave five hours daily at her dancing, stopping occasionally to wring out her hair and begin again. I have heard, but with what truth I do not know, that her sole object, frankly confessed, is to capture a rich husband. Apparently she achieved her end, for later she was to be seen in a Petrograd theatre ablaze with diamonds.

The Tsar fell much in love with her and used to visit her in a very humble home. The authorities encouraged the affair, seeming to consider his choice fortunate.

Later, when the Tsar married Victoria Alice, daughter of our Princess Alice, who, it will be remembered, married the Grand Duke of Hesse, he provided handsomely for his old love and she consoled herself with the Tsar's brother, and later a third brother.

She was by this time immensely rich and living in a magnificent palace with troupes of servants, all much in awe of her.

Notwithstanding her riches she was a most careful housewife, going through the inventory every month with the heads of the different departments. Once a trembling butler was found to have twelve more tumblers than on the official list ; he confessed they were there ready to replace breakages when they occurred ; whether this was considered praiseworthy or the reverse I do not know.

This dancer has now been arrested, there are many stories that are highly entertaining about these people, but I fear hurting English susceptibilities, and many are not suitable for publication.

Kshesiska was not the Tsar's first love, she followed Miss Labunska. I am not sure that is the way it is spelt,

but Russian names are spelt just as they sound and that is the nearest I can do.

The Tsar was called " Nicka " by his courtiers because they said they could do what they liked with him. I often used to speculate on what would be the fate of " Nicka," remembering that out of twenty-five previous rulers twelve were murdered, the deaths of six were suggestive, and one had had enough of life and so ended it. Six died natural deaths, three of them being women, the only three Tsars who have died in the ordinary way being Michael Theodorovich, Alexis Michaelovich and Peter II. And now we know poor " Nicka " has also been done to death.

I have heard it stated that Russia, like other dying countries, has been ruled by women, as if that accounted for much of her trouble. I should not like to say Russia is a dying country, and I do not think a woman's rule necessitates a country's demise. I know a country ruled for sixty years by a woman and the country is far from dead, though with sorrow I must allow of late years it has become alarmingly corrupt, and we are paying and suffering for it in the sacrificing of young manhood, most of whom have had little to do with the corruption. For some years this corruption has been growing apace, and many of us have known it, now it is well known everywhere and the appalling part of it is no one seems to be ashamed.

We have said to ourselves if this party and that party were in power things might be different. Unfortunately the knowledge has come home to roost that whatever party comes into power they have to become corrupt, it appears, to be part of the mantle of office.

There is much that is anomalous in England as well as Russia and always has been ; though for magnificence and discomfort combined, Russia leaves us standing. In the famous Catherine's day, for instance, she lived in great state, gold bedsteads, gold dressing-tables, etc., but no chairs to sit upon or pillows whereon to rest her noble head when reclining on her gorgeous bed !

Amongst other talented Russians who have visited our

shores I must not forget Nojinsky; he married a Hungarian. During the second year of their married life this couple went to stay in Hungary to show their first-born to the mother's country. They had chosen an unfortunate moment, as they were at once interned and everybody refused to nurse or feed a Russian baby. No pleadings were any use, not even milk for the infant was allowed to be delivered; this was terrible, but "necessity is the mother of invention," and chocolate and water were used as a substitute, answering admirably. On this the child was reared, and when last I heard of it, was thriving.

Much discomfort was endured by these good people; for a whole month they lived on twenty-four francs! quite an experience after several hundreds a week.

Nojinsky is now, I believe, in America, thanks to the King of Spain and the American Ambassador; at least that is what a little bird told me and it is a trustworthy little bird.

The Russians are good comrades in a way not possible with the Latin races. The former can be on the most pleasant friendly terms under all sorts of circumstances, and yet treat a woman with respect.

When the Russian Commission came over to England five officers were told off to negotiate with English and American firms for the sale of motor vehicles of all sorts for the use of the Russian Army. The interpreters who had been provided were found to be unsatisfactory in several ways, and my friend Helen was asked if she would undertake it, as knowledge of the language and integrity were required more than business experience. She undertook the work and enjoyed it very much, finding it interesting and at times confidential.

They used to sit at the Savoy Hotel. On one occasion she was given a difficult correspondence to execute in a language with which she was not very familiar and bristling with technicalities: it speaks well for her perseverance that she succeeded in making herself understood.

Helen is a dignified little body with an assured manner, slight and petite. She looked a speck sitting amongst

these big soldiers and business men whilst interpreting for them in about half a dozen different languages as easily as if they were her own, for she is a gifted person able to speak fluently in about seven languages.

A Russian Staff Colonel in this Commission had some trouble in arranging matters satisfactorily with some of the contractors who quarrelled so fiercely amongst themselves that he feared the war services were likely to be prejudiced. After trying all ordinary means to reconcile the differing factors the Colonel hit on the novel plan of going to each privately and saying something of this sort : " Look here, that other fellow is most awfully cut up about this row and feels he is certainly in the wrong, but he does not like to approach you in person, for fear you should refuse to be friends with him. He therefore wishes me to apologise to you unreservedly on his behalf. All you have to do is to make no reference to this when next year you meet, just be very friendly and show you accept his apology." The diplomatic Colonel having said this to each in turn, all accepted the apologies of the other and became great friends again, paying one another generous tribute as became an occasion when all were victorious.

Another of the Russian officers for whom Helen acted as interpreter was very delicate, a few months later he was sent to make a report on some invention being tried at the front and returned badly wounded, obliging his leg to be amputated, he was dangerously ill but refused to have an anæsthetic, fearing he might not be able to deliver his report which he dictated during the operation, dying half an hour later.

The versatile Helen went as nurse and interpreter with Lady Muriel Paget's Anglo-Russian Red Cross Hospital Contingent, subscribed for by the public. In Petrograd the Grand Duke Demeliovitch set a portion of his palace apart for use as a hospital, and here for a time Helen worked, the Duke occupying the other part of the palace. The Tsaritza used to pay visits to the patients.

Nursing in a hospital of this kind is comparatively easy,

everything being provided for the convenience and comfort of the wounded, the size and airiness of the wards being exceptional.

Suddenly an order was received for a matron, some nurses and the interpreter, to proceed at once to the zone of the active armies.

All went well on the two days' journey from Petrograd to Kieff, but the latter place was so appallingly crowded there seemed little chance of sleeping accommodation for the night. Helen and the matron (who had done splendid work in the Balkans) waited an hour in one hotel in hopes of being allowed to sleep on the floor of the bathroom, but they waited in vain. Finally a small hair-dresser's establishment offered them hospitality in their ladies' saloon, for a wash and brush up. The proprietor brought them a jug of hot water and a basin on a stand generally used for hair-washing. After refreshing themselves with this the travellers distinguished themselves by upsetting a box of powder over everything just by way of a remembrance ! in spite of which the kindly hair-dresser would hear of no recompense.

Red Cross tickets were forthcoming for the night, at last, so the newly found friend's hospitality was no longer needed.

CHAPTER VII

Red Cross nurses misunderstood—The Sanitar's forgetfulness—Hostile aeroplanes visit the Red Cross camps—With the wounded in the dark—A superhuman doctor—Long hours in the operating tent—Patience of the wounded—Disgraceful state of Russian hospitals—Lady Muriel Paget in the doctor's hands—A pre-war Trocadero waiter—Russian orderly's method of obeying orders—English and Russian soldiers fraternise in hospital—The Colonel's orderly deviates from former excellence—A sergeant's curious report—Operations under difficulties—A father's instructions to his wounded son—Two girls influence a regiment—A gruesome sight—Prayer before battle—Russians and their prisoners—England's lost opportunities—Germany steps in—A great Russian scientist—Sour milk a life-prolonger.

SOME of the nurses passing through Kief went to a restaurant for dinner. As their expenses were paid they were naturally anxious to keep down expenses, so decided to have the table d'hôte dinner, hoping the waiter would understand them they asked for " dinner." Yes ! evidently he understood them, for he smiled comprehendingly and shortly returned with a delicious melon ; this was an excellent beginning. Anyone who has been in Russia during the war and known the scarcity of fruit and its prohibitive price will know how much this melon was enjoyed.

After this delightful *hors d'œuvre* the waiter reappeared expectantly, and their mistake slowly dawned on them, evidently something they had said suggested melon and the dinner had yet to be ordered. Something very small and cheap was now asked for and they went hungry away. The mistake was very natural, " dinja " being the Russian for melon.

Many and strange were the nurses' experiences before they reached their destination ; amongst others they slept on the floor of a perfectly bare room from which all windows

had been removed by bombs. Part of the journey was by motor ambulance along appalling roads and through fields: I was going to say the monotony was relieved by their losing their way and being overtaken by darkness, but there was not much monotony, the journey bristled with interest, and before being overtaken by the darkness they enjoyed the most exquisite sunset against which were silhouetted a train of artillery and transport combining to make a long-to-be-remembered picture of the splendour and the pity of war.

After plunging up and down hilly fields they reached their destination only to find no tents were ready, so this time the night was spent on the ground. What was most distressing was that the Sanitar who was responsible for raising the last camp had accidentally left the poles for the operating tent behind, so they were unable to do anything for the wounded that night, and the endless stream of the pathetic little curtained carts had to travel on through the night, with their pitiful burdens to the next camp.

When eventually all was ready the camp looked charming with its large operating tent, three ward huts, and one for the staff.

The Russian Military Hospital was opposite the Red Cross Camp, the woods around were stacked with shells. Near the Red Cross Camp was a light narrow-gauge railway, for which the Austrians were responsible during their occupation; it ran from the firing line to Lutzk, the base for the south-western front. This was used for the wounded. The nearness of this railway and the ammunition stores perhaps accounted for the fact that every fine day the Red Cross Camp was visited by hostile aeroplanes.

An aircraft battery stood in an adjoining field, it was interesting watching them potting at the enemy aeroplanes.

The work for the nurses was now hard, all day long the little white-covered springless carts streamed up with the wounded.

Speaking generally, the men were very patient and

grateful for anything done for them. It was anxious work taking the men down the steep hill in carts to the railway station *en route* for the base where they could be attended to better. Lifting them from the carts into the flat straw-covered trucks was difficult work, on fine days it was trying enough with the patients not tortured with pain, but on dark stormy nights with patients groaning in their agony it was excessively trying, especially as the only light available came from blazing torches stuck on the end of sticks which nurses snatched from one another. A superhuman, wonderful little squint-eyed doctor in charge of the station rushed about jumping on and off the train shouting abuse at everyone, but personally, and even tenderly, seeing to the comfort of the men. A truly wonderful man with God-given strength for the occasion, he worked night and day often without food or sleep. Though he had no time to attend to his own needs he determined to have a buffet at the station where tea and other comforting drinks could be made for the wounded, and in spite of all the calls on his time he succeeded in arranging this.

The strain of lifting patients is very great on women not accustomed to such work, quite apart from the nerve strain inevitable on such occasions.

Many of the plucky women and girls who are giving all their strength and energy to nurse and help the wounded in this Armageddon will surely never again feel young, the scenes they have witnessed, the pain they have been powerless to assuage, must be a lifelong nightmare to them. I know from experience it is not *at the time* when nursing desperate cases that we feel the strain, we are too highly strung and full of anxiety for our patients; the horrors of it come when the tension is over and nothing more is required of us.

For some time Helen worked in the operation tent. Considering this hospital and the one at Petrograd was her first experience of surgical work, which it must be allowed seems a far cry from ballet dancing and festive little suppers in restaurants, it speaks highly for her powers of self-control

and pluck that she was able to hold herself together and be useful without once breaking down.

Only on one occasion did she have to be helped out into the fresh air for a few moments to avoid fainting. Her working hours in the operating tent were from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. with half an hour for dinner and the same for tea *if* she was able to eat any!

Many operations had to be performed by the light of one little sixpenny lamp held by Helen who had to dodge about with it to prevent the shadow of the doctor's hand getting in the way of his work.

At another time she did night nurse's duty in a tent packed with stretchers lying so closely to one another on the ground that it was almost impossible to get between them and each stretcher filled with a man in agony; she felt as others have done, that there is nothing more painful than to hear strong brave men crying out in their pain, and being powerless to help them to any appreciable extent.

One cannot help wondering how the good God can allow such things to be.

To make the difficulties of the night nursing more trying only one candle was allowed, which had to be reserved for emergency. All distressing things seem more distressing in the night, and in those early morning hours when we turn over a new page in the book of our lives, and wonder what will be written on it, praying that some day we may find it recorded that we did our best.

On one occasion when an evacuation was taking place the wounded suffered much more than they need have done, owing to bad management. Helen, the matron, and another sister went down in the carts to the station with the worst cases, crouching amongst the straw with a poor wounded head or limb in their hands or laps, trying to lessen the shock and jolting on the way to the clearing station, where all was a hopeless muddle. When a little train of wide, flat trucks covered in straw arrived the nurses fought for places for the worst of their cases, searching frantically for spare straw to prop up mangled limbs.

The attitude of the sufferers in their endeavours to save people trouble was almost inhuman. The hospital orderlies were tying up the chins of men not yet dead preparing them for their graves, the patient calmly acquiescing, thinking it was a saving of time and trouble later.

There were some barracks near the camp which had been turned into a hospital under Russian management. Helen helped to nurse here for a time and was appalled at the awful state of things she found. Imagine a hospital with no sanitary arrangements of any kind, naturally the smells were overpowering. Cooking, operating, surgical and dysentery cases were all mixed up together, the only rule in force, or perhaps I should say that was expected to be attended to, being that the blood on the sheets from the last patient must be dry before another was put in the bed.

It was said at that time that in the whole of Russia there were not more than one hundred hospital nurses, and many of these by no means fully qualified. Small wonder so many wounded men were brought into the Anglo-Russian hospital in such a pitiable state, for how could that number of nurses cope with thousands and thousands of wounded? The doctors also found it practically impossible to attend to each case as they would like to have done, and others became careless from stress of work and despair.

Some of the men brought into the Anglo-Russian hospital had pieces of cloth, earth and grass still deeply embedded in wounds. One Russian soldier came in with the whole of his back a festering sore, and with fourteen different wounds. At one time when Lady Muriel Paget went to one of these hard-worked doctors for advice, he dressed the bad eye with the proper lotion and gauze, then, with the same gauze, swabbed out the unaffected eye! I have not heard the result yet.

An Austrian prisoner was told off to wait on the nurses working in the hospital, he had been a waiter at the Trocadero in pre-war times, and he served up cocoa in odd saucerless cups in great style.

When in camp a Russian orderly waited on, and did his

best for, the nurses and sisters in their tent. Like most Russians he was very domestic and found it difficult to understand that there were times when his services could be dispensed with advantageously.

The nurses had rigged up a sort of bathroom in their tent by stretching canvas on poles, the orderly was given to understand by the interpreter (Helen) that he really must not come into this sanctum while the nurses were having their baths: he showed his respect to their unaccountable English prejudices against entry while bathing by looking over the top of the canvas screen to make sure if anybody was there or not before entering!

Happily life is not all tears, even amidst the misery and suffering of war there are lighter moments.

For instance, in the Anglo-Russian hospital at one time, an English sailor, named Ernest, found himself in bed next to one occupied by a Russian. The latter became greatly attached to the cheery kind-hearted Jack Tar. The Russian recovered first and on leaving the hospital bid a tender good-bye to Ernest, and—kissed him! The sailor, much embarrassed, remarked later to Helen who was nursing him, "Of course if it had been an Englishman I'd have knocked him down—but there—with these foreigners give 'em a h'inch and they take a h'ell!"

There was also a little diversion one day when a most exemplary orderly who was acting soldier-servant to one of the officers, I rather think it was the Colonel but am not sure, at any rate, this well-behaved and excellent soldier either gained access one day to something stronger than tea or perhaps was suffering from shell shock and nerve strain, for he suddenly deviated from his former excellence by going into his master's tent and scrubbing all its contents with hot soap and water, including his valuable field glasses, cigarettes, cigarette case and other articles unused to soap and water.

Another soldier, this time from Siberia and unaccustomed to any of the ordinary amenities of civilisation before the war, was acting as orderly to the bacteriologist in the camp.

He was sent by his master to fetch him some water, he brought more than was wanted and was told so by his boss. The man looked hastily round to see where he could dispose of some of it, finding nothing and knowing his master was waiting, he poured the superfluity down his own throat !

Some one showed this individual one of those little " Teddy Bears " that are made to fit over three fingers. He was much upset, being quite convinced it was the devil pure and simple, nothing would persuade him to go anywhere near it, even when deprived of its uncanny semblance of life and lying limply on the floor.

There was still another delightful person, a sergeant of most orthodox military bearing, who one day marched erect and stiff up to the officer in command of the camp and informed him with a majestic salute, " I beg to report that five cows have arrived for the commissariat, three of which are bulls ! "

In the Russian hospital at Lutzk the nursing was of the most promiscuous order, pitifully overcrowded and indescribably dirty. It was a question of looking where to place the feet when walking down the passages.

Austrian prisoners were utilised to carry in the wounded. When they arrived with a stretcher load, the unfortunate sufferer was simply tipped off on to the floor, the stretcher-bearers immediately departing for a fresh load to be treated in like manner.

Lutzk was the base for the south-western front salient and was fairly lively, the sky being illuminated on three sides at night, shells flying about and bombs being dropped from hostile aeroplanes in the immediate vicinity. When bombs were dropped the sensation experienced was curious, one of the doctors on the spot endeavouring to carry out operations under these trying circumstances described it as " Bombelly " and all thought it descriptive.

In front of the hospital and Red Cross camp were the Russian observation balloons and hard by the anti-aircraft guns.

Winding away to the right a long white road was visible

for a considerable distance. Up one side of this, almost daily, a long ribbon of marching soldiers might be seen singing on their way into action. On the other side coming away from the front a long stream of white-covered springless waggons bringing back fragments of humanity; men who had been singing on the road but a few days before, now mostly bearing what I call the "trench look" that baffles description, something grim, scared, enduring, nothing-can-matter-any-more look, and not a murmur or grumble from any of them, soldiers never grumble or murmur in stressful times, only when things are prosperous and comfortable. Some of the wounded when brought in are beyond words, they only wish to be left in peace in some quiet corner.

The Russian soldier is sad and morbid by nature, I think one of the reasons why they loved the English nurses was because of their brightness. When patients were sufficiently convalescent to take interest in everyday matters many of them spent their time trying to educate themselves, by practising writing and doing sums. Occasionally they asked the assistance of Helen and she was faced with problems and questions dealing with finance to which she was expected to give immediate and brilliant replies. This she found trying, mathematics not being one of her strong points.

There was one lad in the hospital with a badly injured leg, he had been told he must have it off but would not hear of it, so the poor leg was left growing hourly a greater source of danger to him. At last after his nurse had spoken seriously to him and explained the risk he ran he gave in and his leg was amputated, he then explained his reluctance to part with it. His father would never speak to him again for having it off, for he had written to his parents telling them what the doctor had said, and had received a reply saying if the leg was cut off he need "come home no more." His father had looked forward to his son taking care of his mother and working for her in her old age and of his being a help on the land, but what use would he be

with only one leg? He was to be brave and stick to his leg. Now the leg was gone he wanted to write and tell his people, but he dare not; at last he summoned up sufficient courage to write the letter and it was despatched. There followed a long silence; no reply came—no word of forgiveness.

Some time later there appeared at the hospital a grey-headed, stern looking, finely built old man carrying a basket. When asked his business he explained he had come to see No. ——, an ungrateful son who had lately allowed his leg to be cut off. He then proceeded to roundly abuse the nurses and doctor for their share in the proceedings. When conducted to his son, he kept some distance from the bed heaping words of anger and bitter disappointment on his ungrateful offspring's head. No word of protest escaped from the cripple's lips, but his sad eyes looked longingly and perhaps reproachfully at his father. After some of his bottled-up misery had found relief in words, a revulsion of feeling seized the old man, his face worked with emotion and he burst into tears. Picking up his basket he placed it on the bed while embracing his stricken son. Presently, one by one dainties and treasures from "home" were unpacked and peace reigned between father and son; the atmosphere of "home" was around them, that magic, blessed word that means so much to us all.

The old father remained two days in the hospital watching the devoted work of nurses and doctor. On leaving he told them that when he went to heaven he should "tell 'em he once spent two happy days in a palace"!

Two Russian Red Cross nurses had a curious experience that seems almost incredible but which I am assured is perfectly true, and I wish I had more particulars of it. This is the story:

The two girls were working on an ambulance train between the front and the base, they had heard rumours of the doctor on the train not liking the look of things towards the front. On taking their places in the train they found it beginning to move in the wrong direction, and not being

satisfied with one or two things they had observed, both girls promptly jumped out. The train moved on without them carrying all their luggage with it. Presently they found themselves surrounded by a regiment likewise moving hastily in the wrong direction. The story tells us these two girls succeeded in making the regiment right-about-face and return to duty. How this magic was worked I do not know; who they addressed, or if they simply held out their arms as barriers and shoo-shooed the regiment back.

Whatever the method was, the Colonel begged these Joan d'Arcs to remain with the regiment, which for a time they did, wearing the boots and coats of dead soldiers. The girls were very anxious wondering how the authorities would view their action, and were expecting trouble.

What these authorities said I do not know, but I do know that the girls have been decorated with the Cross of St. George upon the strength of the Colonel's representations.

When dining in Petrograd some time after this, one of these heroines was taken into dinner by a big military official at headquarters. He related to her a wonderful story about two splendid girls who had, etc., etc., recounting the story, which was listened to as if it had never been heard before. The account gathered a little in the telling which amused her, but she did not betray having any previous knowledge of it.

There has been splendid work done by women during this war, as well as by the brave soldiers, much that will never be written, never known. Some we know have died of their hard work and experiences. One young nurse I know found herself surrounded one night with five hundred wounded, no other nurse but herself and only one doctor to attend to them all, while waggon loads came up with hundreds more, waiting to be unloaded. It was difficult to know where to begin, a sort of despair seized her of being of no use; it was so utterly impossible to cope with the numbers; so many must die before they could be reached. The first soldier she

helped had to be cut out of his blood-soaked, mud-caked kit, he had no less than fourteen wounds.

Both doctor and nurse worked for a whole night and day without ceasing, yet many were not reached, day dawned for them in another world.

When mixing with a fighting army amidst sad and gruesome sights one horror more or less seems to make little difference, a certain callousness, not of other people's feelings but of our own, must and does to some extent grow upon one, nevertheless it is startling on turning some quiet corner to find the dead body of a man hanging on the gallows confronting one. Yet this was the experience of one of the nurses I know who went out to Russia. She had never even seen a dead body in her life before she left home. The man in question was a Jew, I have a snapshot photograph of the incident. The notice above his head was in Russian. Translated into English it reads thus, " This man is hanged for spying and cutting Russian telegraph wires."

The Russians have a particular liturgy for the men, very beautiful and impressive. It was used during a short service before going into battle ; the response to the prayers being at intervals, " Lord, have mercy." This comes from the throats of all present, sounding almost like a clash of brass instruments, yet human voices only.

To look at a crowd of men in earnest prayer before a battle fills one's heart with tumult, and it is impossible to help that great Why ? from presenting itself in wonderment, that a merciful Providence should allow such things to be, as war is in the form we now know it.

As the men cease from prayer and march into action I think most of them have forgiven those who trespassed against them, all forgotten and forgiven, with the great white gate open in front of them leading to Eternity.

The goodness of Russians to their prisoners was very charming. The pay of the Russian Army is miserable compared with that of our soldiers, and we have not been accustomed to consider that excessive.

It is to be hoped that when peace is signed England will take

the opportunity to step into the shoes the Germans will have left behind them, for the benefit of Russia as well as ourselves, by investing some of our money, energy and brains in that at present most unhappy country. A journey to the Caucasus might be enlightening, for there are many possibilities there for business men's brains to cudgel with.

I suggest that a sanatorium on a large scale for tubercular patients at Borjon in the Caucasus might be beneficial to the pockets of the authorities who ran it, and to the patients hitherto accustomed to make for the known health resorts of Germany. The pure mountain air is splendid and the sulphur baths and mineral waters are there waiting for those who need them.

It strikes me England has been very neglectful of her opportunities in allowing Germany to monopolise so much of Russian trade. It would be laughable but for the pity of it when we think that only a few years ago Germany bought large quantities of cloth (valued at thousands of pounds) from England to sell again to the Russians at an increased cost.

I asked an Englishman who held high office in Russia before the war, how he accounted for our doing so little with Russian commerce. He replied, " Because our country is very slack. Agents come over from England representing some of our largest firms, but are unable to speak the language and quite unprepared to quote figures, cost of carriage, etc., all has to be referred back to the head of the firm ; meanwhile a German agent comes along who speaks Russian, knows cost of carriage and every possible detail connected with his trade, and he naturally secures the order. Then again the Germans are wide enough awake to issue their circulars in the Russian language and measures, even being so obliging as to provide them with newspapers free and in their own language, the papers of course represent Germany's interests and commercial benefits.

One great advantage the Germans have over us is in being on the spot, so to speak, therefore able to supply things cheaper than we can.

Russia and Germany have their front and back door side by side.

We have to thank Russia for giving to us one of the great scientists of the age in Elias Metchnikoff who wrought such changes in the old-fashioned idea of pathology; or perhaps I should say who added so much to our knowledge of the processes of resistance to germs. He was great on the subject and study of longevity which the learned call "macrobiotics," and he hoped and suggested that he had discovered the Elixir of Life in milk soured by an association of lactic bacteria which was to keep old age in abeyance.

Unfortunately there must be some hitch in the practice of his theory, for he died at the age of seventy-one in 1916; but not before he had done valuable work for the health of the armies; he it was who established the part played by phagocytosis in the arrest of infectious diseases.

Bacteriology was the stern study of his life, and to him or Koch, possibly the two combined, we owe the discovery of the bacillus of tuberculosis.

When first the idea of sour milk being good for us was started, I saw various friends struggling with it instead of the comforting four o'clock tea. They did not look happy any of them, and a few declined to prove its valuable properties by dying soon after. I do not suggest that the sour milk hurried matters, only it did not hold the Reaper with the Scythe in abeyance.

Besides drinking sour milk the learned man maintained we should eat little meat, and no uncooked vegetables or fruit.

Personally I think if I had to live on sour milk and eat no fruit—I should give up the ghost—at once.

I think Metchnikoff agreed with the philosopher Seneca (the tutor of Nero) who said, "Man does not die, he kills himself," as no doubt many of us do, with injudicious feeding.

A book written by Metchnikoff called "The Nature of Man" is well worth reading. In it he says: "If there can be formed an idea of religion able to unite men in a bond

of religion of the future, this ideal must be founded on scientific principles, and if it be true, as has been asserted often, that man can live by faith alone, the faith must be in the power of science." Here he is expressing what Charles Kingsley so often preached, namely the possibility of reconciling religion with science. The scientific world mourned this hard-working clever Russian when he died.

CHAPTER VIII

English nurse's experiences in Russia—Lady Sibyl Grey and a revolver—Lady Muriel Paget's stories—A quaint prayer—Escape of Russian prisoners—An indignant commercial traveller—Washed in vinegar—A chaplain at work in Flanders—An interview—It proved important—How German influence gained a footing in Russia—Baron Meyendorff at Monte Carlo—Presents his cigarette-case to the author—A wander round the Casino—A row between two women—A beautiful woman disappears—Various methods of making money—A young gambler—No programmes issued—A German spy—Author introduced to him—He is shot—Count von Hochberg at Dunster—He builds a hunting-box—But does not hunt—Orders his valet to "blow up the place"—A rumour—Strange discoveries—An exciting mothers' meeting—Some people are libelled—Lawyer's letters—The Crown Prince in Jermyn Street—"Mickie" and "Willie" have merry times—What of Prince Henry of Pless?—And Prince Kinsky?—Baron von Eckhardstein—Misses the chance of his life—Concerning the Anglo-Japanese Alliance—King Edward sends an urgent telegram—Count von Bülow and the Kaiser—Their views of British Ministers—Mr. Alfred Rothschild speaks up—So does the King—Absurd secrecy—Crown Prince's visits to the "Billie Carlton" opium den—Count von Heltzendorff searches for him—A horrible discovery—A solitude *à deux* disturbed—The Crown Prince gets a thrashing.

ASTOUNDING stories are constantly reaching me from or of Russia. A friend who has lately come home from that country has given me an almost incredible account of the happenings in that land. Life and property are entirely things of the moment, both may be demanded of you at any time.

An English nurse out there at the time of the Revolution was one day held up by a ruffian and told that unless she would be obliging and kiss him he would shoot her, he held a weapon in his hand in readiness. In a novel I suppose the proper thing would have been to say, "Never, I will die sooner," this nurse evidently considered "discretion the greater part of valour," and therefore lived to fight another day.

Lady Sibyl Grey tells an amusing story of an experience of her own a few days after the revolution broke out.

She was carrying out her usual duties in the Anglo-Russian hospital when a young student walked in followed by an armed guard. The students were doing police work (that force being at sixes and sevens and thoroughly disorganised) and they found that the only way of maintaining any sort of order or justice was at the point of a revolver, so got into the habit of carrying one in their hands. The student who had come to interview Lady Sibyl brandished one aggressively within an inch of her nose, he was speaking fast in Russian and she understood him to be demanding all the wine they possessed in the hospital, to be delivered to him at once.

She wisely agreed to comply with his request.

After a time when the man had almost exhausted himself in his endeavours to make himself understood it became clear that instead of demanding wine he had come to say the new Government had requisitioned the wine shop near the hospital and it was to be given for the sick and the share of the Anglo-Russian hospital was two hundred bottles!

All this time the revolver was covering the nurse, evidently from force of habit and not from any wish to annoy.

Some of Lady Muriel Paget's stories are extraordinary. It will be remembered that she was the organiser of the Anglo-Russian hospital. She points out the "simplicity and unconcern about the Russians." In illustration of this she says that once on a tramcar in Petrograd one of the passengers was discovered picking the pocket of a fellow-passenger. A committee was at once formed amongst the other passengers to decide if he was guilty or not, the finding being in the affirmative, the culprit was at once bound hand and foot, and when the river Nerva was reached the tramcar was stopped and the man thrown over the bridge into the river. All the rest then proceeded on their journey, resuming the conversation just where it had been left off when the excitement began.

Lady Muriel tells another story illustrating the state of affairs in Russia after the Revolution.

Any well-dressed person must expect to be held up in the streets and have his shoes and great-coat requisitioned by the mob, a revolver being held at his head until the de-robing process is complete. A friend of hers met with this experience, his fur coat being demanded, he pleaded that he had only just stolen it himself so ought to be allowed the use of it for a time at any rate. Apparently they saw justice in this and moved on, and the fur-coated gentleman was left in peace, thanks to his wits.

Another story of hers came to me through a man lately from Russia.

The revolutionists recognise none of the originally abided-by laws of God or man and hold meetings to discuss the dogma of their religions. On a certain ship of the Black Sea Fleet they held a meeting to decide whether " there is a God or not." After some argument and a fairly exhaustive hearing of both sides, the majority decided there was *not*, therefore they had " no use " for a chaplain and he was given his *congé*.

Another committee appointed to rearrange the prayer-books composed the following opening address to a prayer in place of the orthodox one in a petition to the Almighty.

" President God of the Heavenly Republic . . . bring peace on earth without annexations and indemnities ! "

Exciting times have been experienced by prisoners of different nationalities during this war whilst trying to escape. Ten Russians succeeded in evading their German task-masters a while ago, and arrived safely in England. One of them gives a thrilling account of how he escaped in a dust and refuse box, it is surprising that he lived to tell the tale. For the sake of others it will be better not to say more than this.

It is not as easy now as it was even a year ago for anybody to come into England or leave it without his why and wherefore being made known, unless assisted by some pro-

German authority. The dear old country is taking the King's advice to " wake up."

A chaplain friend of mine was crossing the Channel a short time ago. During his frequent journeys to and fro he often met a commercial traveller making the same journey. On the occasion of which I am thinking the chaplain showed his passport and was allowed on board, but the traveller was detained and taken inside an office. He turned up on board some two hours later, the ship having been delayed for him, and indignantly described to the chaplain what had taken place.

It appeared that the commercial had been told he had a foreign accent, which was true enough, he was then deprived of his clothes and his body washed with vinegar in search of hidden writing; nothing incriminating being found he was allowed to continue his way.

The poor man conversed of nothing but these indignities during the greater part of the crossing until he fell asleep from exhaustion.

On arrival at his destination full of the steps he meant to take to prevent such a thing from ever happening again, the chaplain missed him once more and the train was kept waiting for some unexplained reason. Presently the traveller appeared foaming at the insult, for again he had been detained, undressed, his pockets turned inside out and his back painted with vinegar; last time he suffered this indignity it was his chest and diaphragm that was painted. His mental attitude rendered him almost speechless, but the words that were articulate were swear words painful to the chaplain. While thoroughly understanding the necessity of these examinations it must be a very disagreeable experience.

The chaplain was asked at one time to undertake the work of collecting the identification discs from off the dead at the front, to find out where others were buried, and write to their relatives giving them all the information possible. Whilst writing up the information and making huge lists in a tent at head-quarters in France he was asked if he would

see a person who said he had something most important to tell him but would not say what his errand was.

Though very busy at the time the chaplain consented, and the importunate individual was ushered in; he had a long story to tell of a wonderful discovery of his he wished used for the benefit of the wounded. The parson pointed out he was hardly the person to deal with the matter, the head army doctor must be informed of the discovery, and he was such a very busy person it was almost impossible to get in touch with him.

However, the man seemed so much in earnest and so anxious that my friend said he would go and see if he could prevail upon the Medical Authority to see the man and sample the precious invention. On the condition that the chaplain would not allow more than five minutes of valuable time to be taken up, the doctor agreed.

The result of this five minutes and the discoverer's perseverance is that to-day the invention is an unspeakable blessing to hundreds of wounded soldiers. As far as I could gather it was an anæsthetic and antiseptic which when applied over bandages and dressings that have stuck enables them to be removed without any distress to the patient, all that is necessary being to paint round the sore place and over the bandages, after which they come away painlessly and easily.

I enquired how it was we had not heard more of the invention, and was told in reply that it was not desirable that it should be better known at present, as there might be a run on the ingredients and we should not be able to have enough for our own men.

It will be interesting to hear more of this matter by and by.

While listening to people talking of Russia and how she arrived at the present crisis, it surprises me to hear how many speak of German influence and intrigue as if it was entirely a matter of recent years, or a something that happened in the night. A good deal of the discontent is of comparatively recent date, but German influence has been covering two hundred years, though not until after the

Russo-Japanese War did Russia begin to open her eyes, and see things as they are, to resent being ruled by Germans, and seeing Russian trade and money pass into German hands.

As I am not writing this book for the benefit of schoolmasters or critics, who of course know all about Russia and her history, but for the large number of people who know little or nothing of that tragic country or how she came to her present unhappy climax, I may perhaps be forgiven if I briefly explain in common or garden language how it came about that so many Germans held posts of importance at Court and how their intrigues became so rampant, without dipping too deeply into politics.

First, it must not be forgotten that the Russian Imperial family have been and are to a great extent German, being on the male side Holstein-Gottrops, while the ex-Empress is the daughter of the Grand Duke of Hesse.

This in a measure accounted for there being a number of German-speaking officials around the Court, these individuals have intermarried with other baronial families and so kept hold of Court appointments.

Not so very long ago we found some of the most important posts being held by such names as Baron von Roop and Baron Meyendorff, these names being quite household words.

Speaking of Baron von Meyendorff reminds me that once at Monte Carlo an agreeable man of that name was introduced to me; I wonder if it was the same individual? We became great friends for the moment and discussed the way to break the bank, as well as other exciting things.

One evening I was returning by a late train to Beaulieu where I was staying, the people I was with also had a villa there. The Baron insisted on walking to the station with us; it is only a stone's-throw from the saloon.

Just as the train was leaving the station the Baron handed his beautiful silver cigarette case to me asking me to take one, the train moved off while it was in my hand. I held it out through the open window towards its rightful owner,

but he stepped back bringing his heels smartly together, took off his hat with a flourish and put both hands behind his back. I made preparations to throw it to him, but he shook his head and in another moment we had left him far behind. I felt rather embarrassed, and handed the cigarette case to my friends asking them to return it to the Baron when next they went to Monte Carlo, they being much more frequent visitors at the table than I was.

In the course of a few days I received a beautifully written note on gorgeous paper saying how unkind it was of me not to keep "the bauble." The writer of the note I remember was verging on stout, had thick fair hair cut very short and square across the forehead.

I noticed he had particularly nice hands, which he seemed to admire, judging from his attitudes, he had the square finger tips so indicative of capability and common sense. I remember his asking me why I came to Monte Carlo when I never played? I did not quite know what to say, because I did not know why I was there. I do not always know why I do things. I certainly was not there to gamble, for I never play, neither do I bet on other folk's games.

Various reasons have taken me to that delightful cosmopolitan and much-abused spot. There are times when the dulness and commonplaceness of life under grey skies amongst grey people, and with grey thoughts, become more than can be borne, when we feel that unless we seek the sunshine and pleasant froth and polish of a cosmopolitan crowd by the tideless Mediterranean we shall do something desperate.

It is quite useless trying to explain one's feelings, so few would understand, and the country cousins would lift their eyebrows and prophesy something horrible.

A visit to Monte Carlo is most refreshing, you always meet crowds of old friends, see the latest thing in fashions and come home feeling much taller and with more stiffness in the spine. It amuses me to see how apologetic some people are when you meet them there, they at once search for some excuse for their presence.

I liked to wander round the roulette tables in pre-war days and look for the faces I knew quite well, from having seen them there so often. I became quite friendly with one or two old ladies whose habits interested me, and whom I always found sitting in the same chairs, grasping the same money bag.

I was witness once to a heated altercation between two women as to who owned a pile of winnings on the table. No. 1 put out her hand to gather it in, No. 2 did the same. No. 1 called No. 2 an adventuress and other such terms, whereupon No. 2 slapped the face of No. 1. The croupier was called upon to pay both at once, the *Director du Jour* was appealed to and the parties were led away out of reach of one another, expostulating loudly. How it all ended I do not know, but I saw how it began. No. 1 was playing on an even chance and leaving her winnings on the table to accumulate. Now it is an understood rule or etiquette that you should touch your pile with the rake before the *coup* is played to establish your claim to it. Failing to do this there are plenty of people about who, when not being noticed, will touch it as if by accident and then claim it ; no protest having been made when in the act of touching. It then requires a Solomon in all his glory to decide who it belongs to. In this case I saw clearly it belonged to No. 1, but it was no business of mine, and having no desire to have my face slapped I retired into a corner near an old lady with whom I had a speaking acquaintance, who was a regular attendant in the rooms. I asked her if she could tell me what had become of the beautiful lady we all remembered in previous years who wore such wonderful hats and was always dressed in white, whom we had often admired.

My companion at once became mysterious and, screwing up her eyes, informed me that late in the previous season the lovely lady had in a moment of mental aberration come to play leaving her " lucky bean " at home, and though she backed all the odd numbers as usual, her luck was gone, and she ended in being " cleaned out."

I murmured something sympathetic ; I think I said

" Poor dear," or something quite unique of that sort. However, that was not the end of the story. The wrinkled old face and screwed-up eyes came nearer while she whispered " And she's never been seen since ! Her rooms are locked up by the order of a friend and none of her beautiful things are to be touched until more enquiries have been made."

I did not hear the rest, the roulette wheel was spinning again, order was restored and the old dame went off to play. Everybody was being called to " attention " and to " make their play."

There appear to be more ways than one of making money at the tables. There was one old woman I often watched; she came the moment the doors were opened, bringing sandwiches and a flask with her. She played a little on a system with a note-book and pencil in front of her and seemed fairly successful in a small way. As soon as the table became crowded and people were standing two or three deep behind her she very kindly offered to pick up their piles and hand the money over her head to those playing and unable to reach the table.

How well those little beady eyes knew who to help in this kind way and who it would not be wise to assist, for quite accidentally, of course, in handing up the money one or two pieces occasionally got into the glove or sleeve, but the poor, dear, green beginner was so taken up offering profuse thanks for her kindness, and knowing so little about the game, that he or she were quite unaware they had won until they were told, and even then had no idea how much should be theirs, and were easily bamboozled; so all went merrily until presently the old sinner would say she found the room hot, and perhaps the gentleman standing near her would like to have her seat ? There would not be a vacant chair all the evening probably, and people always sold their seats.

Oh ! what a kind old lady, of course he would like to have it if *really* she did not want it any more. What is the proper price did you say ?

" Well ! *You* shall have it for a louis ! " The transaction

being completed though all seats are free, off waddled the old woman to try her luck elsewhere.

Everybody you meet has a system, all of course—infallible (on paper).

Wandering one afternoon into the room where *trente-et-quarante* was being played, I found the silent crowd sitting and standing two or three deep round the table covered with green cloth. There was no sound but the crisp crinkle of bank-notes as they were being placed under a weight at the end of the table.

I looked round at all the faces. Was it possible? Could all this anxious, weary-looking crowd be there for amusement? Each one looked as if every note put down meant life or death to them.

I was particularly struck with the face of a boy sitting at the other side of the table to where I was standing; he looked no more than two-and-twenty, if that, but he must have been twenty-one, or said he was, to be allowed in the rooms: the rules are very strict in this respect, no one under the age of twenty-one is allowed to enter.

This youth I was watching was staking heavily and losing heavily, his face growing whiter and whiter, and biting his nails until I longed to go and take his fingers out of his mouth.

I dare not tell you what he stood to lose, you would not believe me if I did. He attracted a good deal of attention, and each time he played there was a sort of indrawn breath went round the table. Presently he took everybody's breath away by going what we should call "Doubles or Quits."

I felt as if I was frozen to the ground. Where was the boy's mother—why was she not with him? perhaps he had not got one.

What had happened? What was this scraping of chairs and buzz of voices? Why was the boy staggering away with a white drawn face?

Because he had *won* and the bank was closed for the day.

I looked for triumphant smiles on the boy's face but found none; another young man was shaking him by the hand

and congratulating him, but still I saw no smile, only a misty look in his eyes, and as he passed close to me I heard him say in a voice shaken by emotion, " Oh, no ! Never, never again—— " I wonder ?

There is a fascination about these gaming rooms, the whole atmosphere is so entirely different to anything you can find elsewhere. You are transplanted to another hemisphere peopled by every description of actors and actresses of the world's stage, some by nature pitched too high, some by nature plunged too low, all meeting half-way 'twixt joy and woe.

Every day fresh scenes are enacted, sometimes drama, comedy, tragedy, or broad farce : to those who can read between the lines the place teems with interest ; you can never tell what the day will bring forth, for no programmes are issued, but you must be silent and take your seat or there will be no performance.

When I had seen enough I used to wander on to the sunlit terrace looking over the sea. It seemed to me the old Greeks were wise when they called the night " Euphroné," meaning the time of meditation. And as the snatches of music floated by me on the breeze I learned lessons of love and toleration for all mankind.

Those moonlight nights at Monte will always live in my memory, there is something cold and aloof about the moon that makes one feel very small. Dear beautiful world, I love you and all your properties, sun, moon and stars ; yet what do you care for us, for any of the human crowd, your sun will shine, your shadows fall, just the same—the moon may hide her face awhile, the flowers shut their eyes and fold their arms in sleep ; but what is human life to all of you ?—Nothing ! If all humanity with its pulsating joys and woes were swept off the earth what would you care ? —Naught.

I have come to the conclusion that some of the very agreeable foreigners I used to meet at Nice and Monte Carlo, and for the matter of that in our own country, were both there, and here, on business more than pleasure ; in

these days of complicated intrigue it is hard to tell who are friends and who are foes. Spies walk abroad abundantly. To be a spy would no doubt be a very exciting life if one could harden one's self sufficiently to do underhand tricks unblushingly.

Without knowing it at the time I have spoken to a real, true, active spy and feel very important in consequence. It happened thus :

Some friends living near the big flying school at Netheravon in Wiltshire asked us to motor over and see them, saying they had just got a new *chef*—a real treasure—surprisingly well informed, superior, and with charming manners. Naturally we hastened to make the acquaintance of this paragon. After an excellent luncheon the *chef* was presented to me so that I might compliment him on his confections.

The man was a little above middle height, had penetrating dark eyes, and well-trimmed beard, his clothes were well cut and he certainly gave the impression of being a superior being, and I rather wondered at his being a *chef*, but I have known some who were far and away more lordly both in appearance and manner than their employers.

I made a few polite remarks to this interesting person on his being such a master of his art and so forth, he in return made polite remarks about its being a pleasure to make dainty dishes for appreciative people and so on. I noticed a slight foreign accent but nothing very marked, not nearly so noticeable as the accent of some of our own Royaltics whose early days were spent in foreign lands.

Shortly after my return from this visit, I received a letter from the *chef* saying he was thinking of leaving my friends, and would like to come to me if I was wanting a good cook ? It so happened that I did not. He then went (I am told) to the officers' mess at the Flying School and from there to a naval base, where a short time ago he was caught red-handed, with maps, plans, designs, and other important documents with which he had no business, and which would be valuable to the enemy.

It was proved beyond all doubt that he was a German spy, and he was shot.

What the man thought he would gain by coming to us I cannot imagine, as we are not near any great naval or military centre of consequence: no doubt, however, he would have found time to ride good distances on his motor bicycle; to Minehead, for instance, which is within pleasant motoring distance, and that neighbourhood provided this part of the country with considerable excitement at the beginning of the war.

The story is curious.

About six years ago Count Conrad Hochberg, whose name proclaims his nationality, purchased a plot of land near Dunster, which, at the time, did not seem to be a very desirable spot whereon to build a house, the site being fully exposed to the Bristol Channel and difficult of access. Nevertheless, there arose by degrees a big building, which the Count referred to as his hunting-box and christened Croydon Hall.

What more natural than that a person fond of hunting should wish to reside in the heart of the Devon and Somerset country? but his neighbours were puzzled when the place was built—an accomplished fact—he did not hunt! Instead of filling the stables with horses, and following hounds, he left the country, returning with a number of foreign friends and servants, also one Englishman who acted as private secretary receiving a very high salary, report said he was an ex-soldier who thought he would as soon work for foreigners as his own countrymen.

The Count was good to the poor, lavish with his money, and popular in the district, I suppose the one naturally followed on the heels of the others. Much of his time was spent in taking long motor drives in every direction, chatting with anybody and everybody *en route.*

When war was declared the Count disappeared and sent a telegram to his valet, saying "Blow up the place." This was handed to the police and the hunting-box passed into their hands.

Poor, sleepy, peaceful little Dunster, lying with her head in the bosom of Minehead and her feet in the lap of Porlock, was rudely awakened by this social earthquake; the inhabitants could talk of nothing else for months. They tell tales of many strange things that were found in this house built on the hill, including hundreds of rifles, huge packing cases of ammunition as well as seven thousand gallons of petrol and numerous maps and plans of the English coast and defences.

Rumour insisted that the Count was met at Dover by some English people who thought it better he should not leave the country just now, but whether this is true or not I cannot say for certain.

Every window in this hunting-box faced the sea, no ship or aircraft could pass that way unobserved: and no one could climb up any of the three roads leading to the place without being seen by those occupying the house. It was discovered that layers of seaweed were packed beneath the boards, presumably to make them silent.

In the grounds large mounds of earth had been built up and hedges planted on top. While a huge hole big enough to bury the entire population of the place caused the investigators some conjectures.

Once when the owner was asked what this place was for, he replied—" For a cesspool."

I wonder if the cesspool was intended for another well of Cawnpore, or Black Hole of Calcutta, to which the Count contemplated introducing the people of Devon and Somerset.

A night watchman and a number of dogs of alarming countenance and manners guarded this extraordinary place, which sounds like some of the enchanted palaces we used to read of in our fairy-tale books when we were children.

After the story became known many people in the surrounding country grew nervous, wondering if there were hidden bombs anywhere about, also who was friend and who was foe.

The immediate outcome of this excitement was that some ladies in the neighbourhood attending a mothers' meeting

Photo by Elliott & Fry

COUNT VON HOCHBERG, WHOSE COAT OF ARMS HAS NOW BEEN REMOVED FROM HIS SEAT IN OLD CLEEVE CHURCH AND HIS ESTATE SEQUESTERED BY THE GOVERNMENT

or some such philanthropic gathering, told their friends who were amongst those entertaining the mothers that they knew as a matter of fact that a house quite near, where they were holding their meeting, and which was occupied by some people rejoicing in a German name, was showing lights at night to assist the enemy, and that mysterious motor-cars were running between Minehead and this place all night. Everybody present felt crisp with nervous horror, while the parson presiding at the meeting felt it his duty to make the story known, so that it might be enquired into. The result being a number of lawyers wrote a variety of letters asking for explanations and apologies, or proceedings would be taken against them. Everybody libelled everybody else, and the local doctor was kept busy prescribing bromide and sleeping draughts for a number of patients who were mixed up in the case.

The happy people who were not dragged into the row thought it all very funny, myself among the number.

Eventually we were told the lights which had caused so much fuss were swinging lanterns to keep foxes away from the young lambs and the motor-cars were doing humane work in bringing doctors to someone who was ill.

There are certain people in the West Country who thought it a great shame to say that von Hochberg was German ! that he was nothing of the kind, and that he was a very good man, and very lavish with his money to the poor round Dunster. For the sake of peace we will say von Hochberg is not a German name and that he was a very desirable person bent entirely on charitable dealings, but there is no getting away from the fact that he was a very intimate friend of the Crown Prince and was constantly with him during his last incognito visit to this country, paying large sums to try and keep the mad escapades and disgraceful proceedings of his friend and chief out of the papers, especially the foreign ones ; as all were not blind, some recognised the long nose even when passing under the name of Mr. Jones or Robinson.

The Prince lodged in Jermyn Street during the visit I am

thinking of, and the Count stayed at an hotel I know very well in Mayfair, which has, by the way, now changed its name.

The Prince called the Count " Mickie " in a most familiar way and he returned the compliment by addressing the Prince as " Willie " or " Cæsar "—a merry time these two had. Hochberg was a smart-looking man, I once heard a woman call him " very elegant " !

There seems to be little doubt that the Count aided and abetted the Prince in his frolics, but did his best to keep all dark, though it was not always easy, for when his chief over-lubricated, which was not an uncommon proceeding, he at times gave himself away.

It would be interesting to read the diaries, if they have been rash enough to keep any, of some of the Germans who enjoyed the hospitality of this country before July, 1914.

To mention only a few. What about His Serene Highness Prince Henry XV of Pless, at one time Secretary to the German Embassy in London, whose second son is called after the late King Edward VII? and what are the feelings of that Prince's three sons, their father a German and the Kaiser's right hand, fighting against their mother's country which has sheltered her throughout the war.

And what of charming Prince Kinsky, who came over here with Elisabeth, the late Empress of Austria, when she wanted to try and drown dull care in the hunting-field? He was entertained royally by everybody and much liked. A good man on a horse and had great spirits, always ready for a rough-and-tumble, or practical joke, like any schoolboy.

He *said* he would rather be fighting for us than against us. Does he still feel like that, I wonder? And it would be interesting to know how much of the information he acquired here from his erstwhile friends has been useful to him and his country.

Baron von Eckhardstein was considered by many to have been the friend of England while German chargé d'affaires in London in 1901. He certainly missed the opportunity

PRINCE CHARLES KINSKY

of his life over the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. According to him the German people were dead against concluding a triple alliance between Japan, Great Britain and Germany, but that the Kaiser and Count von Bülow were in favour of it.

We know that Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the Duke of Devonshire, and, later, Lord Salisbury, were in favour of it. At first Eckhardstein was enthusiastic about it, but this was a time when the relations between great Britain and Germany were, what in diplomatic circles would be termed, " strained."

It had been decided between the Japanese and British Governments that they would ratify their alliance and then see if Germany would like to come in, and that then Japan and Great Britain were simultaneously to place the idea before them—spring the little surprise on the German Government. The very evening that this little arrangement was to be put into practice, an urgent message came from King Edward stopping it, and instead of an invitation to join in the Treaty if so inclined, a simple notification of our treaty with Japan was sent. I think the reason King Edward cancelled the original arrangement and turned it into a notification was chiefly in consequence of the speech made in the Reichstag about that time by Count von Bülow, in which he abused Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, and used unparliamentary language about our Army. I know the King had little confidence in Eckhardstein.

Mr. Alfred Rothschild told the latter in 1901 that many of the British Ministers disapproved of the attitude of the Kaiser and von Bülow towards Russia, thinking Germany was trying to curry favour with her. Eckhardstein at once informed the Kaiser of what had been said to him, and the Emperor wrote to King Edward on the matter. When this letter was received Eckhardstein was sent for and the letter read to him. When the King arrived at the part referring to Germany's attitude towards Russia, turning to the chargé d'affaires he said, " *Qui s'excuse, s'accuse !* " and no doubt the Baron felt small, but there can be nothing

small enough for his feelings when that part of the letter was reached in which the Kaiser referred to the British Ministers as " unmitigated noodles." He tried to turn it off and said of course that was only a joke. The King laughed and said, " Yes, the Kaiser has made worse jokes in the past, and may do so in the future." In this letter the Kaiser again expressed his feelings of friendship for England. King Edward with some dignity said, " I hope that is so," and made a few rather pointed remarks for the Baron to digest at his leisure.

All the secrecy and fuss over the Anglo-Japanese Alliance for fear Germany should get wind of it too soon amused me, for without doubt she knew all about it the whole time, was being kept well informed, but it did not suit her at the time to take any notice of it. Perhaps her relations with Russia had something to do with this.

I think there was some truth in the assumption that Eckhardstein was a friend to this country while in office here, but who can tell ? One thing is, however, certain. He was arrested one Christmas Eve (I am not sure which) in Berlin during the war and shut up in the convict prison at Moabit, under the existing martial law, in consequence of some stringent criticism he was overheard making of certain phases of German policy..

The Baron's chief faults were, he was a gambler, a fool and very extravagant. When war broke out he was a member of many English clubs, amongst them the Marlborough, Garrick, Beefsteak, and the very, at one time, exclusive Royal Yacht Squadron. He was supposed to have a property near Shanklin in the Isle of Wight, but he only rented the place. I believe that he, more than any of those who in pre-war times basked in this country, will try to come back, if he can assure himself that some of his old friends will be agreeable to him. Lord Cork was one of his greatest friends over here.

I met the Baron once or twice. He was good-looking and had charming manners, but I never trust anybody when their eyes are so near together, and it worried me the

way he parted his hair ; the parting was not down the middle of his head in a line with his nose, and it was not at one side, but an uncomfortable betwixt and between, which made his nose look as if it were crooked.

He married Sir Blundell Maple's daughter in 1896, but she divorced him in Berlin in 1909, and is now married to Captain Weigall and is a popular hostess.

Count Hayashi was at the Court of St. James's at the time of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. I was anxious to know his views of Eckhardstein, and discovered that he did not trust him.

Hayashi was rather a remarkable man in appearance, his short, stiff, white hair, on his head, and running round his face, beard and whiskers all in one, and cut rather short, against his dark skin and brown black eyes, together with the drooping eyelids that so often denote diabetes and from which I believe he suffered, made up in combination a striking figure. He spoke excellent English and was charming to talk to, being interested in most things and well informed. It was a proud moment for him when the Alliance was signed, as he had always been keen on it, and had the handling of the negotiations. He was very careful in what he said when treading on dangerous ground while appearing almost rash, which was part of his rôle. I think it made other people more communicative.

I was anxious to gather his views of some of our politicians and the men at that time before the public eye. By degrees I learnt that he was an admirer of Joseph Chamberlain, that Lord Lansdowne was lacking in some of the essentials of diplomacy, one of which he mentioned, that Lord Cromer was a diplomatist and a statesman who would serve his country well, that Mr. Balfour was too indifferent and over Lord Rosebery he waxed eloquent. He thought it was a pity, and many will agree with him, that Lord Rosebery was not properly supported by his party in 1894–5. I was pleased to find he agreed with me that Rosebery is an orator ; at all times his speeches are picturesque, I might almost say musical, and unlike many of the speeches we hear and read,

there is always something we can carry away, some sentence that remains in our memory ; I was surprised to find Count Hayashi could repeat verbatim many such sentences.

I do not think we sufficiently estimate the influence of eloquence. With the coming of democracy let us hope an Abraham Lincoln will arise from somewhere.

Poor Hayashi was not a happy man latterly, he considered his services had not been properly appreciated by his own country : and he appears to have been a little out of favour. He thought it was because he had become a Freemason while in this country ; but I think some little difference in politics had more to do with it. At any rate, I have been told that the Count became very bitter and in 1912 retired from public functions, conflicts and politics, spending his time in his home. In 1913 he had an accident which necessitated one of his legs having to be amputated, and he never recovered from the shock.

A much less attractive person than Eckhardstein was Count Ernest von Heltzendorff, who was faithful to no one. He certainly endeavoured to hide the Crown Prince's indiscretions when he was over here incognito ; and succeeded fairly well, thanks to the assistance of Count von Hochberg. But as soon as Germany was in difficulties Heltzendorff did not hesitate to give away the Crown Prince's secrets. The death lately of the actress Miss Billie Carlton recalls some of the disgraceful exploits of the Crown Prince in this country which Count Heltzendorff and von Hochberg endeavoured to keep quiet, and, above all things, to prevent the foreign newspapers getting hold of the facts. The Crown Prince used to visit the same opium den that she frequented, passing under one of the several assumed names he adopted when here incognito. At Henley one year he was introduced to a pretty girl of about twenty whose name I must not give. They quickly became great friends, though she had no idea who he really was beyond being a rich man who was very attentive to her. The freedom of action allowed to the young women of to-day enabled her to go off with the Prince before he had known her many weeks to

this opium den of Lung Ching where he had become a frequent visitor, having been introduced to the Chinaman by a friend living in Carlton House Terrace.

Count Heltzendorff, missing the Crown Prince from his rooms in Jermyn Street and fearing he might be in trouble somewhere, started to look for him in his favourite haunts, amongst them the opium den. He was not there but gathered that he had been, and gone again, leaving the lady that came with him still there asleep, dreaming after her smoke. Heltzendorff recognised the girl who had been introduced to the Prince at Henley and took her home, to find the family away in Scotland and the house shut up except for the caretaker, but she undertook to look after the young lady who had " been taken ill."

The same girl was with him in Scotland when a relation of hers found them together and gave the Prince a good thrashing. Von Hochberg this time had the hushing up to do. Some of these hushings-up were costly matters, but Hochberg was loyal. I never heard of him giving the Prince away.

The nickname of Cæsar, by which the Crown Prince was known amongst his intimates, was bestowed on him originally by von Hochberg.

When retiring into the country for a little solitude *à deux* he gave instructions to the Count to open all his letters, his wife's included and reply to them saying, he was not well enough to attend to correspondence or business, adding, " Or tell them any damned lie you like."

The Prince speaks fluent English, which was a help to him in keeping his incognito when paying little visits to the country, but once or twice a happy meeting was disturbed.

When the Prince was in Paris he got himself into trouble several times if all I hear is true, but his kind friend von Hochberg acted as buffer between him and the consequences.

I have not the pleasure of the Prince's acquaintance, but many friends who have known him well tell me he was very much liked in his own country.

There was at one time a man named Hinkel or some such name who used to have a shop in the south-west district of London who was in constant attendance on the Prince when in this country. I have been told he was quite a famous spy.

The amount of successful spying that has been carried out by women in this country has not, according to my humble mind, been properly realised.

It must be an awkward position for any woman with a husband fighting against the country of her birth, she must be torn asunder between her desire to help her husband and her patriotism, if she has any : but I know one or two Englishwomen who have married Germans who have become almost as German if not more so than their husbands. One that I used to know as a little child, after her marriage became fiercely German. Some time before the war she used to laugh at the English for their blindness and want of enterprise. I think she came to the conclusion that we did not *want* to see, for some political reason, that war was upon us—a war that would shake the foundations of the earth and nations. She spoke of the English as " Silly fools," and when I ventured to remind her she was English, she replied, " Oh ! no, I am not. I have adopted Germany and Germany has adopted me." Her husband was a high official of the German Court.

CHAPTER IX

Lord and Lady E—— in search of peace—In difficulties—The butler offers to lend them money—Flight to flat-land—Full of hope, doubt, despair—Some scourges—The way to live in flats—Some scenes—Tea in a Hen Club—Flight from flat-land—Yorkshire once more—An original character out hunting—The author feels small—A surprise at tea-time—Our country manners—The sportswoman lights her pipe—We meet in church—Impressions left on the mind.

I AM interested in watching the way my many kind friends and true are facing the present war-time financial stresses and discomforts, and the methods they adopt. A few—a very few—have come out on top, having profiteered to some purpose; they are washing their hands in invisible soap and chuckling. Others, who have lost their all, including those that made life lovely to them, have settled into a dull despair. Others again, though hard hit, have taken up what is left to them with both hands and begun afresh bravely, though in reduced circumstances.

If this war had continued much longer we should have had to make our wills like that cynic Rabelais. When his was opened it ran thus: "I owe much . . . I have nothing . . . the rest I leave to the poor. . . ."

We are still too near the mountains to see the tops of them, but we must carry on, and hope for brighter times and some return to us of what at one time in our lives we ventured to call "our own." Some of our efforts to carry on have had their funny side as well as depressing; it is perhaps unkind to laugh at our neighbours' bitter experiences, yet a laugh often helps both ourselves and others through trying times

Some old friends of mine living in the south-west, whom I must not name but many will recognise, having come to the conclusion that their land was no longer a paying pro-

position, and the worry of trying to keep up appearances was not worth the candle, decided to let their place and retire into a flat in town. The advertisements of flats sounded so attractive, so economical and peaceful—what unconscious irony! The treasured belief that domestic peace is to be found in flats is surely exploded now. I strongly advise all who contemplate flying from the worries of households to think twice before taking wing to flat-land, and study the experience of my friends Lord and Lady E——. For society has evolved a new scourge in the flat fiends, who condescend, in return for high wages and three days a week out, to make you supremely uncomfortable, also in the brass-buttoned and official-capped hall and lift attendants who will not see you unless you have a shilling visible in one hand and another ready if you wish to have a cab called.

Should you in moments of mental aberration forget any of these little niceties of flat etiquette cabs will be strangely "scarce at this time of the year," indeed the porter may even be so preoccupied as not to know you are there.

Any person wishing to feel a worm can graduate in worm-hood better in a flat than any other form of dwelling with which I am acquainted, and should they at the end of six months find a vestige of self-respect left I offer them my most profound congratulations, for they are built of stern stuff and as worthy of fame as empire makers.

For those unacquainted with the peculiarities of flat-land, I give the experience of Lord and Lady E——; it may answer as an object lesson. These good people, wearied with the ever-increasing demand of spoilt servants and household necessities which had to be met out of a yearly diminishing income, felt quite cheerful when they had decided on this drastic step, little thinking the snares awaiting their footsteps.

I think for convenience I will call my friends Lord and Lady Repent-at-leisure.

The first crumple in their rose-leaf came when they nearly quarrelled seriously over whose business it was to give the

servants notice, and break the news to them that they were leaving that part of the country indefinitely now that they could no longer afford to keep the place going. Neither of them had the moral courage to do this: Lady Repent-at-leisure told her husband it was undoubtedly his duty, and advised him to send for the butler and housekeeper and unfold to them their determination.

His lordship, however, differed with his better half on this point, and man-like in a difficult domestic situation, declared it was quite outside his province, and under no circumstances would he interfere in domestic matters.

This finely expressed sentiment (which, when literally translated, meant he funked it) was stored for future reference in the storehouse of his wife's mind.

So, perforce, she had to brace herself up for the ordeal, and, sitting up very stiff and straight, summoned the portly heads of the downstairs clan.

I need not detail the poor woman's humiliation. She began very bravely, saying they could no longer afford to keep such a staff, and "regretted exceedingly," etc. etc., feeling fearfully apologetic, and as if the earth was slipping away from under her. The climax was reached when the old butler offered to lend her some money at 5 per cent, and the housekeeper told her she was talking nonsense.

Obviously, after this, the thing to do was to hurry away before any further humiliation overtook them, so the following week saw them in town, already feeling quite frisky and light-hearted at having shaken the dust of servant thraldom from off their feet.

With large bundles of "orders to view" grasped in their hands, and prattling merrily to one another of the mercy it would be to live in a flat with all its unbounded comfort and economies, they sallied forth to view their Meccas. The first in the selected list was No. 1 Hope Court—£400 a year—4 bedrooms, 2 reception-rooms, bath room, etc., described as the greatest bargain in the market, situated in the best part of town, light and airy, and all the rest of the usual patter.

Dismissing the taxicab when Hope Court was reached, they mounted the few steps to the building, and entered. Seeing nobody about, they went back to the front door in search of a bell to ring; here was a board with thirteen bells, all with different names inscribed above them. Which should they ring? As usual, the woman was the first to arrive at the right thing to do—why of course, ring the bell of No. 1, which his lordship did with an air of "I told you so," which, however, disappeared by degrees as he rang three times with a good pause in between each, receiving no answer at all.

Fortunately, a district messenger arrived and rang another bell, so to him they turned for advice. He suggested they should ring the porter's bell—but where was the porter's bell? With the brusque manner and tone of one in a hurry he replied, "Press the button on the left," indicating its direction by a pointing finger.

So the lift bell was rung. No reply. "Ring again, my dear." Lady Repent-at-leisure complied with her husband's request, but still no response, so in despair they were turning on their heels, feeling angry and dispirited, when the lift shot up containing a man in his shirt sleeves, with his mouth full of food, who shouted at them, "What do you want?" With some dignity and the calm of good breeding, Lord Repent-at-leisure began, "I have an order to view No. 1 Hope Court; would it be conven——" Here he was cut short by the porter shouting, "Ring the bell and ask," which, owing to his mouth being bulged out with food, sounded like "Wingth ball in arth."

Before they could explain that was what they had been endeavouring to do for some time, the porter had disappeared with the lift into the lower regions again, so in chorus they shouted after him, "Nobody answers the bell." Muffled echo from below, "Then they're out; I can't help it."

Thus ended the first morning's flat hunt—two hours and thirty-five minutes—drawn blank. The only thing to be done was to try and find a cab and go back to the hotel for

luncheon, which they did, muttering maledictions on the porter, the occupants of the flat, and their servants.

Having refreshed their inner man, another hunt was started in a different direction, in hopes of better luck. This time the flat door was opened by an enormously fat woman, draped in a large bath towel to preserve the freshness of her greasy black gown, which was looped up underneath it. Then began the now established precedent of " I have an order to view," etc. The fat woman, who entirely filled the doorway, showed no signs of moving, but stood with her leg-of-mutton arms resting on each hip, with sleeves rolled up, and an oily smile, and asked, " How long do you want it for, my dears ? "

This having been explained, entrance was permitted, and the electric light switched on to enable them to grope their way into and through the rooms packed with large furniture, looking, and no doubt feeling, very lonely so far away from the palatial residence of its younger days.

Having viewed everything except the servants' quarters, with hearts sinking lower and lower every moment, Lady Repent-at-leisure asked if she might see the servants' rooms and kitchen. Here the fat lady waxed wrath. " Certainly not," she replied, " that is mine, belongs to me and my husband's privacies." Her ladyship pointed out, as her servants would have to occupy them, it was necessary she should see them as to size, etc.

A blue glare came into the old woman's eyes, while with compressed lips she folded her arms across her ample middle and remarked, " Your servants, did you say ? No servants aren't coming in here but me. I am old nurse, and 'ave been here twenty years, and this 'ouse don't go without me." (Voice trembling with emotion.)

Feeling that quite settled the matter, there was nothing to be done but beat a retreat, with many apologies for having taken up so much of her time, but " they had not been informed it was necessary she should remain," and so made tracks for the door. Meanwhile a little manœuvring had been accomplished by " old nurse," and she arrived at the

door first ; once more her ample proportions filled the doorway, and this time with a palm outstretched.

Lord Repent-at-leisure was feeling so annoyed and nettled he had not begun to look for a shilling, and had no intention of doing so ; he was not enamoured with the tone she had adopted with them. When this fact dawned in nurse's mind, she began in loud and strident voice to inform her hearers what she thought about them and their ancestors, not to mention their offsprings, of which, however, at the time there were none, which appeared to coincide with the old harridan's wishes and curses. Being now seriously annoyed, his lordship told her there would be trouble if she did not move out of the way, and his wife became alarmed as she pictured her lord and master in the grip of the old lady while he put some of his jiu-jitsu lessons into practice ; the humour of the situation did not appeal to her at the time.

After a few more good wishes had been expressed the Repent-at-leisures found themselves once more in the fresh air, with a feeling of relief. Walking a few yards in silence, the spirit moved them both simultaneously, and they halted abruptly on the pavement, as if by word of command, and in one voice said, " Isn't this awful ! What shall we do ? "

Then the funny side of it all tickled Lady Repent-at-leisure's sense of humour, and she laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks, and passers-by firmly believed her husband was bullying her, causing one feeling person to tell her it was a shime (shame) of her man to make her cry. This only added to her merriment, but her husband said he saw nothing the least funny in it, and begged her to control herself.

Between bursts of merriment, which she made worse by trying to suppress, and mopping her eyes with about three square inches of lace and French lawn, she tried to make excuses for her behaviour by, " Oh, dear, it would—oh, it would have been so—so funny to see you rolling about in the fat—o-o-h ! ha-ha-ha !—fat old woman's arms while you—you tried to—oh-oh !—trip her up." The situation was saved, and they both had to pretend to look in at a

shop window, though they could see nothing, for they were both convulsed with laughter, after which they felt so weak they gave a small boy sixpence to go and fetch them a taxi, meanwhile not daring to look at one another for fear another paroxysm should be the result.

A taxi having been found, they gave the order for the hotel, and after a drive through the air, became calm enough to return to the flat question without a fresh breakdown.

It would be wearisome if I recounted all the fruitless searches for a suitable flat before one was found which seemed more promising than the rest, and which was taken for three months in despair. Two maids were engaged to do the work of the two bedrooms and two reception-rooms, as the agent grandly described the little box-rooms. Having seen the maids into the flat and explained to them the heavy luggage would arrive in the afternoon, the Repent-at-leisures went to luncheon with friends, enjoying an enormous sense of relief, having at last settled on something, and fondly thinking, as it was a furnished flat, all their troubles were over.

Returning to the flat at four o'clock, they rang the bell and ordered tea. It was some time coming, and when it did arrive the teapot was china, and had only part of a spout left, defying all efforts to place the tea in the expectant teacups, it preferred running down the outside of the spout into her ladyship's lap, and from there on to the carpet. Before this little detail was adjusted, one of the maids came in to say the fifteen packing-cases, the sewing-machine, her ladyship's weighing-machine, two chests of silver and two servants' bicycles had arrived, and where should they be put?

Not until this moment had it occurred to either of them that there was nowhere to store anything. What was to be done? A brilliant idea struck one of them, I am not sure which, but the hall porter must be called and told to put it away until the morning, and then it could come up piece by piece and be unpacked.

So the porter was sent for. A message was returned say-

ing he was dressing and would come by and by. Meanwhile, the luggage filled the rooms, passage and entrance hall, rendering it impossible to move without performing acrobatic feats, with the possibility, if not probability, of severely barking their shins.

After a while, greatly to the joy of the new occupiers, the porter arrived, and stood in the doorway glowering, but making no suggestion, so Lord Repent-at-leisure said, "I wish, my good man, you would remove all this heavy luggage until we have time to unpack it."

A grumpy voice replied, "Where do you want it removed to?"

"Oh, that I must leave to you; perhaps into a spare room, or downstairs into the kitchen, or——"

Here his lordship was cut short by the porter saying, "There is no spare room, there is no downstairs kitchen, you can only put two boxes into the general box-room, and you have two down there already. Everything must be moved out of the front hall; nobody is allowed to leave even an umbrella in the hall, and certainly not boxes."

"Well, porter, can't you advise or suggest something? What shall I do?"

"No, it is not part of my duty to advise people, or pull about boxes," with which polite remark he left the flat.

To make matters worse, neither of the maids had ever been in a flat before, and were standing looking helpless fools wedged in among the cases, swearing their bicycles would be ruined and they should demand compensation.

Lady Repent-at-leisure, worried to the verge of tears, in a pathetic voice asked the maids if they could not put some away in cupboards and under beds, and so on. No help was coming from that quarter, for the servants said every cupboard was nearly full when they arrived with the belongings of the landlord's family, and were now full to bursting point before the heavy luggage arrived.

Suddenly a brilliant idea suggested itself to Lady Repent-at-leisure; she had been told there was a telephone, and though she had never used one, no doubt it was quite easy.

The thing to do was to call through to a repository—she knew there was one in the neighbourhood—and tell them to send at once and take the heavy luggage into their care until it was required again.

Having climbed over the packing-cases, hurt one knee, and thrown down a bicycle, she called to her husband to come and speak through the telephone for her while she endured the pain of her bumped knee. The poor man had likewise never used such a thing in his life before, though he had seen them used, and it had seemed very simple, so he climbed over the packing-cases with nothing worse befalling him than tearing his coat tails on a projecting nail.

During all this time the servants kept up a running accompaniment of " Never saw such a disgraceful state of things ; it was a fraud to bring pore girls into a 'ouse like that ; not another moment would they stop," and so on.

The telephone being reached at last, Lord Repent-at-leisure endeavoured to speak through the receiver, without any satisfactory results, and after running through the entire vocabulary of his most intimate and cunning curses, gave up the attempt, and sent for the porter to show him how to use it. After this had been explained to him he said, " Oh, yes ! Yes ! I see ! Of course ! " and tried again, delivering a long message to the repository without having asked the Exchange to put him on to any number.

Confusion was now worse confounded. The porter, who was standing looking on in scorn, was overheard telling the maids " These sort of country people should not be allowed away from home without their keepers." At this, both being country girls, they took umbrage, telling him he was not up to much himself or he would not be where he was, with nothing to do but open and shut a door all day, because he was too big a fool for anything else, and other compliments of much the same order, the last being that he was nothing but a " hignoramus."

Order was restored at last, and the porter seized hold of the telephone, called through himself to the repository, telling them to come at once, which order was complied

with in an astonishingly short space of time. The maids demanded and received a month's wages, board and lodgings, and departed with their bicycles.

With the luggage and the servants gone, a delightful calm settled on the flat, a good deal of worry and annoyance had been crowded into a few hours, and it was pleasant to be able to breathe without having insults hurled at their heads. After discussing the situation, they decided to shut up the flat and return to the hotel, where they at once compiled a letter to the agent from whom they had taken the flat, requesting him to sublet it as soon as possible for anything it would fetch.

In the hall of the hotel they encountered the friend who had advised them to try living in a flat, because she herself lived in one and liked it. Into her ear they poured forth all their troubles, which seemed to amuse her greatly; they thought her most unfeeling.

We are all apt to think that best in general for which we find ourselves best suited in particular. Mrs. Hayman, the friend they were addressing, was best fitted for a flat, without any doubt; she invited the Repent-at-leisures to tea with her the following evening, to see the way she managed in hers, being thoroughly happy and comfortable. They gladly accepted her kind invitation, and arrived punctually at five o'clock the following day at 1001 Amen Court.

A small capless and apronless girl answered the door after they had climbed up three flights of dirty stone stairs, and informed them Mrs. Hayman was out, but was expected in every moment.

The room they were shown into was very bare—no curtains, only a sofa, four chairs, a round table, and one or two milk-maid stools.

Patter, patter up the stairs, and a clatter of latchkey in the door, announced Mrs. Hayman's return (she lived alone; her husband was in an asylum), and she arrived breathless from the haste with which she mounted the stairs. Announcing that she would first show them the flat and explain how she managed everything, and then take them

to tea at her club, as she never had meals in the flat if she could help it, preferring to feed either at her club or at a small eating-house quite near.

With a comprehensive wave of her arm around the room Mrs. Hayman explained, " This is my sitting-room. Jolly room, isn't it ? " Fortunately she did not wait for an answer but continued all in the same breath, " The less furniture you have in a flat the better, but have a bright carpet and chintz." Owing to this room looking out on to a blank wall at the back of a public-house the rooms are dark.

" We do not open these windows, flat windows never fit, so we filled in the half-inch gaps with paper and putty, and painted over it all to avoid the draught. When we want air we open the fan ventilators over the door which opens into a passage, opening again into the kitchen, which window opens into a courtyard, where we get beautiful fresh air from some nice clean stables. It smells so fresh and lovely in the morning, they begin work about five o'clock, which is grand for us, so wholesome ; the maid cannot sleep any longer, neither can I, so she gets up and does her work, and in the summer I go out—the early summer mornings in London are heavenly ; in winter I turn on the light and read.

" You see, I have no curtains anywhere, they are a nuisance in a flat, and bring the washing bill up to a frightful sum. This sofa I am sitting on I had made for me ; the top lifts up, so I can pack away heaps of things inside—stores, knives and forks, hats, boots, linen and all sorts of things. I have to keep tea, sugar and soap in the house, so they go in with the rest.

" That little flat thing," pointing towards an object leaning against the wall, " is my writing-table ; when I press this button it opens into a convenient little table which shuts up again when I have finished with it, and modestly turns its face to the wall."

At this point Lord Repent-at-leisure recovered his power of speech, remarking it was a charming table for a lady, but for a man, with all his business papers, ledgers, account

books, leases requiring daily attention, etc., it would be quite useless.

" Quite so, quite so," replied Mrs. Hayman, " but people with worldly possessions entailing such things would not live in a flat at all, would they ? "

His lordship felt crushed, mentally resolving never to speak again.

Mrs. Hayman moved on into another room with a wave of her hand. " This is my bedroom, a lovely room. One of the advantages of these flats lies in the small amount of furniture necessary. The bed is so near the dressing-table I can sit on the end of it and still be near enough to see in the glass to arrange my hair—that enables me to dispense with a chair. Then I have this cupboard for my clothes ; a wash-hand table combined with a chest-of-drawers (you have to be careful or the wet gets in amongst the clothes). I generally stand the jug on the end of the bed when I am using the washing-basin, but here again you have to be careful, for if you sit down suddenly on the end of the bed, the jug empties itself amongst the blankets, but that, of course, is only a trifle and soon put right. This small strip of carpet by my bed completes the furniture of my bedroom.

" The great art of living comfortably in a flat is to have nothing more than you stand up in, and one change of everything, so that you never get crowded out. When you have finished reading a book, sell it, give it away, exchange it, or put it in the fire before bringing in another. If you buy a new hat, burn the old one as the new one enters the door. The same rule applies to most things.

" Now come and see my bathroom, and you have seen it all. I only have a bath once a week, because coal is expensive, and the water cannot be heated without it. The portmanteau standing on one end by the bath I use as a chair.

" You see, I only have £800 a year, so have to be very careful. My rent for this, unfurnished, comes to £250. I pay my maid 12s. a week, say £30 a year, and pay for her food another £25. I have an arrangement with a little

eating-house round by the mews at the back, and I let her go there for her meals, it prevents her being dull, and I do not mind leaving the place empty, there is nothing worth stealing."

It suddenly dawned on Mrs. Hayman her friends were not very responsive, and perhaps not very appreciative, so she took breath and paused, asking if they did not think she managed very well on such a small income.

The Repent-at-leisures looked at one another for inspiration. What could they say? Her ladyship recovered first, remarking, "It is most splendid for those who like it, and you certainly manage well, but, personally, I would sooner be dead than live like that!"

"Would you? Why?" asked Mrs. Hayman in a piqued tone.

"Because that way of living does not appeal to us. We should live in our flat, and not be out all day, for one thing Then, just consider, you could have quite a good-sized house even in town for considerably less than you pay for your flat, while £800 a year in the country would be quite a nice little income for you.

"Of course, everybody to their own taste. I am only speaking of how it appears to me," continued her ladyship.

"But, dear Lady Repent-at-leisure, with a large house I should want a staff of servants, and then where would my peace be? I only pay this girl 12s., because when I am out I allow her every afternoon to take out the children of the Italian man who has the eating-house, and in return for her taking them into the park for an hour daily he gives her 2s. 6d. a week, an arrangement that suits everybody—the Italian is pleased, the girl is pleased, I am pleased, and I hope the children are."

"What about the coal, did you say?"

"Oh, that is very simple. It comes up in the lift every morning; the porter attending to this building keeps all the coal belonging to the tenants in cellars below, and sends up what is required every day. If by any chance we oversleep ourselves and do not take the coal in when it arrives,

it goes down again, as the lift is wanted for the use of all the other occupants of this block, and therefore cannot be left awaiting our pleasure, and we have to do without coal until next day."

"Now come to the club and have some tea; we will pick up a taxi at the end of the road."

All these useful instructions had been rattled off without much pause for comment, for which the Repent-at-leisures were profoundly thankful, as the lack of the ordinary luxuries and comforts generally to be met with in civilised life had dumbfounded them.

Arriving at the club, the first ladies' club they had ever been into, they waited three-quarters of an hour for some tea, which was very nasty when it came, and was bumped down on the table by men-servants who appeared to look upon the members and their friends as one of life's crosses to be borne with as much fortitude and as little expenditure of labour or civility as was compatible with their being in residence on the premises.

After this doubtful refreshment, good-byes were exchanged, and the flat-hunters returned to their hotel sadder and wiser people. Neither spoke a word, but drove back in silence and went straight to their rooms, emerging in time for dinner, each with a note-book and pencil in hand.

Feeling a little less dejected after dinner, they seated themselves side by side on a sofa and compared notes. Lord Repent-at-leisure opened the meeting by asking the very pertinent question of, "What is the advantage of being in a flat at all?" Neither of them could find a suitable reply for some moments, and then her ladyship, with the look on her face of one who has solved a great problem, or found a great truth, ventured in a timid voice, she had hoped it would solve the servant problem and relieve her of the worry of them; also there were, she understood, no rates and taxes to pay.

"Granted," replied her partner, "but I have been working it out while I dressed for dinner, and find that a flat suitable to our modest requirements in a part of town we

should care to live in will, judging by the agents' lists, cost us £15 15s. a week, or rather over £800 a year, and even then be very small and uncomfortable, obliging us to have the chauffeur and footman sleeping outside. So I propose taking a house, giving us ample room, at the rent of £500 a year, which will leave a good margin for rates and taxes.

It did not take long, after settling what they would do, to find a charming house in Green Street, Park Lane, at rather less rent than the £500 planned for.

Flats are an excellent institution for business people and bachelors, who eat a hurried breakfast while they read the paper, and then rush off to work, not returning till dinner-time, and then only to dress, and return again to sleep. The servants then have plenty of time to put back into their places all the things that have been thrown on the floor when searching for a clean shirt which, owing to want of room, had been packed away on top of a wardrobe, above which had been placed the extra blankets when the hot weather set in, above which again were heaped all the motor great-coats and accessories, all these, of course, having to be hurled to the floor to search for clean shirts.

I prophesy flats will not be the rage much longer; they have reached their zenith, unless the owners make better arrangements for the comfort of occupiers, and engage hall attendants who are less rude and repulsive.

Each block of flats should have a book in the hall which has a lock and key, kept locked by the owner of the flats, a duplicate key being given to each resident, so that they may write therein any complaints they have to make, or any remarks. Once a month this book should be inspected by the flat owners, or a tactful representative who would be able to deal with the contents and remove or smooth out the many crinkles inevitable in the daily life of those who dwell in flats; it would also keep the attendants on their best behaviour.

The flat owner, or his tactful right hand, might also be able to explain to those on the lower floors there is nothing to be alarmed at when the people upstairs water their plants

outside their windows, and all the surplus splashes into the downstairs meat-safes and into the milk. It might also be consoling to know that London cats and dogs are so hungry they may be depended on to remove all the half lemons, bones, soup meats and vegetable refuse thrown into the would-be green piece of garden outside the bedroom windows.

New-comers might, in fact do, get disheartened at first when these little details are not explained away with the gentle, reassuring touch of diplomacy.

Flats may answer as a half-way house, or a makeshift, but as a home in the good old English sense of the word—never. Should circumstance oblige anyone accustomed to a comfortable home to dwell for a while in a flat, I strongly advise them to be very busy every moment of the time; it is their only chance, for we are all happiest when we have no time to pause and think if we are happy or not.

Life is a mixture of comedy and tragedy; we rack our brains and our bodies for every pleasure they contain, thereby only hurrying up our own collapse; we are all hungry for, and madly searching for, happiness and peace.

Heaven only knows who has found it.

My memory now carries me far away from flats, streets and chimneys, and follows the Repent-at-leisures into the country, where they often took a house for the hunting season. The county that I love, which is always beckoning to me when I am away from it.

At one time I hunted a good deal in the North from that home of sportsmen and sportswomen—Yorkshire. Many happy days have I hunted with the Hurworth, South Durham, York and Ainsty, Cleveland and other packs. It was while hunting with the Cleveland that I met one of the most interesting characters and veriest sportswomen I have come across or probably ever will come across. Though I do not give the name many will recognise the character.

I was staying with friends, who kindly offered to mount me. On arrival I was informed we were hunting on the following day.

The morning was bright and cold. My mount was a young, only half-broken-in hunter, so when we arrived at the meet I thought it discreet to wait in a quiet corner of a field well away from the pack. Looking round to see if there were any faces I remembered, I saw near me on the other side of the hedge a very quaint figure on a fiery chestnut, the rider of which also deemed it wise to keep well away from hounds.

I must try to describe her, though words are bound to be inadequate. Picture to yourself an old lady of at least fifty summers, in stature about five feet four inches, thin and square, a figure I found she described as having "no nonsense about it," which is more able than any word-painting of mine, face weather-beaten and wrinkled, small, intensely blue eyes nearly hidden by unkempt little hay-stacks of eyebrows which grew out in grey, angry-looking bristles at all angles, and—dare I say it—a few seemed to have found their way down to her chin. The latter and her nose were of the nut-cracker type. Her jaw was square and stern.

I never like that word jaw, it always sounds rude and vulgar, but perhaps that is because I was brought up with schoolboy brothers who adored the word.

The old lady's face looked very small under a large mush-room-shaped hat, which almost entirely covered her rather pretty grey hair. The hat was devoid of all trimming of any sort or kind, and tied on by black ribbon with a *dégagé* looking bow under her chin. Her habit was an extraordinary arrangement, looked as if it was made of American oil-cloth, but of course it cannot have been, really. This was surmounted by a loose jacket fastened into the waist by a big leather belt. Hedging gloves and Wellington boots two sizes too large put the finishing touches to this toilet.

As soon as I had an opportunity I asked my friend with whom I was staying who this interesting-looking person was, who, in spite of the strangeness of her attire, seemed to be thoroughly at home on a horse. He replied, "Oh!

Don't you know Miss ——?" (I will call her Middlethorpe, though that was not *exactly* her name.) "I must introduce her to you, you will like her, she is such a good sort, lives near us, people think her very eccentric, perhaps she is, but everybody likes her, and *we* have ceased to notice anything peculiar about her dress or appearance, it is so part and parcel of herself, and a very delightful self. She is an old maid, and lives alone with an ancient housekeeper on a picturesque farm. Two or three farm boys work under her, but she does a great deal of the work herself, all her own hedging and in a most masterly way trudges up and down with the plough. You may meet her often in the lanes leading a horse and cart, hauling a load of turnips or manure, or breaking in young horses. She has pots of money, is most charitable, and an exceedingly good woman; she is sister of that bishop they have just sent abroad, I forget where, saw it in the 'Morning Post,' I dare say you remember!"

"Yes, yes!" I replied, "but surely she is a little past her first youth, and the horse she is riding seems to be a handful."

"Ah! You wait and see how she goes, she's a ripper, a rum 'un to look at but a good 'un to go. I forgot to tell you she is very clever and deeply read. When she gets tired of ploughing she ties the horses' nosebags on their heads, and then sits under a hedge eating bread and cheese translating, or whatever you call it, Dante into Hindu, Pushtoo, or some infernal language of that sort."

Here our conversation came to an end as hounds moved off. While waiting outside a covert being drawn I observed Miss Middlethorpe having some trouble with the chestnut, which seemed to prefer moving backwards to the usual mode of procedure. Presently, hearing a crash, I turned my head to see what had happened, and espied the chestnut had at last succeeded in backing into some rather rotten wooden railings, and all three—old lady, chestnut, and wooden railings were down in a heap. I was preparing to go to her rescue but was stopped by a man near me, saying nothing

offended her more than people taking any notice or interfering when she was teaching her young horses.

At that moment we heard the joyful sound, hounds had found, and had evidently slipped away at the far end of the covert, so off we all went, though I cast an anxious glance in the direction of the old lady, it seemed so inhuman to go and leave fifty summers in the deadly embrace of the chestnut and rotten railings.

We had a grand little burst of about twenty minutes, and my youngster behaved himself very nicely, the only thing that worried me being, he was too heavily bitted and kept shaking his head, refusing to have it interfered with, which is always a little disconcerting, especially with a young one, it is so much easier if they take hold a little. During this nice little run I found myself confronted with one of the nastiest of places—a yawning chasm too big to jump except on an exceptional horse, and I did not care for riding down on the nervous, rather foolish animal on which I was mounted, so got off and proceeded to lead down one side and up the other, thinking discretion the greater part of valour, when I heard what sounded like a charge of cavalry coming up behind. Before I had time to realise what was happening and collect my scattered senses the old lady and the chestnut flew over the abyss and disappeared on the other side. I felt rather small. Why had not I charged at it and got over as she did? and I wondered if she had done it on purpose, or if it was a case of *nolens volens;* but evidently the thing for me to do was to hurry up and follow in hot pursuit.

After quite a good day we were on our way home, jogging that peculiarly fatiguing jog supposed to be pleasant to tired horses; I hope it is, for certainly it is anything but pleasant to tired riders; we were a cheery party, five of us hunting from the same house, and were busily engaged comparing notes on the day's sport, to find as usual how at variance we all were as to what the fox had done.

One of our party made some remarks about the master's method of hunting. Our host in a gentle, purring voice

replied, " In the North we think whatever the master does is right, and as ours pays quite half the piper, we consider he has a right to choose the tune." It served the man right, but I felt sorry for him, he must have felt so crushed. It may, however, be a lesson to him and the others who heard it.

To change the conversation and cover his retreat, I asked my host if he had seen anything more of Miss Middlethorpe after our first run, but nobody had, and it was supposed she had had enough and taken her hunter home.

The rest of our ride was made agreeable by accounts of the wonderful goodness and kindness of heart of the old lady, her prowess, and endurance in all weathers, the prices she got for her hunters when she had made them, and some really good stories of some of her transactions with dealers who thought they were dealing with a fool.

It was growing dark as we finished tea. All gathered round the smoking-room fire, pipes and cigarettes were being lighted, when we were startled by what sounded like a tap on the window, then it rattled violently. Our host went to see what it was, and pulled the blind up. In a moment the window was thrown open and his hearty voice was saying, " This is luck ! Come in ! How pleased I am to see you, how pleased we all are to see you ! But—what has happened ? Not hurt, I hope ? "

I craned my neck round the corner to see what it was all about, and there outside the window, covered in mud from head to foot, carrying her saddle on her arm, was my friend of the morning, Miss Middlethorpe. When we found she was not hurt, we all laughed while apologising for our country manners. She quite entered into the joke and laughed heartily too, I don't quite know why—just goodness of heart, I suppose. But she really looked very comic, five foot four covered with mud, carrying a saddle nearly as big as herself, the rest of her lost in the shadows of her mushroom hat.

She was pressed to come in and have some tea, but declined, saying she was too dirty, but would sit on the win-

dow-sill and dangle her legs outside if we would give her some tea there; but we could not allow that, and spread newspapers on the sofa and from the window to it. She then strode over the window-sill, still hugging her saddle, and placed it on the floor beside her, nobody else was allowed to touch it.

After she had been refreshed with tea, we again asked her to explain what had happened. I had been told she had great charm when I was out hunting, and now I came under the spell. Her voice, manner, humorous way of looking at things, and her wit certainly made a very charming and uncommon companion. What had at first struck one as peculiar and grotesque was quite lost sight of in her delightful and refreshing personality.

She told us her chestnut had got a " swelled head " after negotiating one or two tidy jumps and thought it knew better than she did, and when she said, now we have had enough, it said, no, let us go into the next county, and proceeded to do so, taking all and sundry in its stride, till for want of breath he " concussed the earth over a binder in a bullfinch." She felt a bit giddy herself at first, and so had the horse. It took some time getting him on to his feet again; she feared his back was hurt, so took the saddle off, fastened him up to a gate with his broken bridle, and was proceeding to the nearest farm for help, when a donkey in an adjacent field made a fool of itself with that silly noise it called braying. This so entirely upset the equanimity of her horse, it immediately recovered, threw up its head, broke the reins again, and took what she hoped was the shortest cut for home, which reminded her she ought to be on the tramp to look after it. All sorts of kind offers were made to drive her home, send her saddle for her, anything, in fact, to help her, but she refused, saying many pretty, graceful things about knowing she would find a kind welcome; she always did, it was a second home to her, etc. She prepared to walk a distance of two miles, carrying her saddle. This, however, was forcibly taken from her to be sent home early next morning.

As she started away from the front door she struck a match on the sole of her boot and lighted a most disreputable-looking short pipe and disappeared into the darkness puffing away in evident enjoyment.

So many pleasures had been provided me by my kind friends I quite forgot all about this dear old lady until I was in church the following Sunday. We were rather early, and I was interested in watching the simple, peaceful-looking country folk taking their places, when who should walk up the aisle into the chancel and seat herself at the organ but my dear old lady, looking much the same, only instead of a habit of sorts, she wore a short tweed skirt and coat, the same mushroom hat or its first cousin, hob-nailed boots, a walking-stick and a bundle of books strapped together under her arm.

As soon as she had arranged her books to her satisfaction she began to play, perhaps to pass the time, perhaps because she loved it. There was no music in front of her, she was playing from memory one of Mendelssohn's sad little prayers without words. How absolutely devoid of self-consciousness she was, and what a rapt little grey face; as I watched and listened to her it seemed to me she had found what many of us have missed. Life with all its withering things, all its bright little lights put out one by one, seemed to have passed her by. She was like a lighthouse, her light burning brightly, nobody noticing the structure or decorations, only attracted by the light burning within.

CHAPTER X

Mr. Lloyd George—Is he a conundrum?—What the Quakers think—The Prime Minister's early environment—The cobbler uncle—The lawyer defends the lawless—Lloyd George in a fury—The temperaments of North and South Wales—Forming a character—An annoying smile—Repartee of yesterday and to-day—Sir John Gibson of Aberystwyth—Suffragettes complain of rough handling—The Welsh people offended—Lawyers in the House of Commons—Lloyd George's first Budget—Democratic royalties—Lloyd George makes a mistake—Lord Selborne has something to say—Some inaccuracies—Lord Northcliffe and Lloyd George—Mr. Labouchere's cynicism—Count Hayashi defines a diplomatist—A diplomatist teaches his wife—Harsh words—A meeting at Harrods—A political understudy—A wife's diplomacy—She hates it—Introduction of a foreign prince—Colonel Cato's financial stress—The prince to the rescue—Oriental cunning—An official rumpus—A big cheque—Obliging bank manager—An enquiry—A friend in need—A horrible day—Prevarications—The prince plays up—His Highness offended—Good-bye.

I WONDER if anybody understands Mr. Lloyd George? Still more do I wonder if he understands himself. I call him our Mr. Lloyd George, for we have learnt to lean upon him in a way that at one time seemed utterly unlikely.

There are many people, and some of those who know him best, who are puzzled to this day as to why he, the bitter opponent of the South African War, should have been so desperately anxious to prosecute the great world war with the utmost efficiency. It had always been the fond hope of the Radicals of a certain school—the Quaker school—that he would correctly reflect their ideas in the prosecution of the war. His warlike attitude, determination and policy first surprised and then staggered them, and to-day he has been cast from them, ruled out of their circle as a demagogue and a Jingo.

Undoubtedly in his heart he carries the courage of his

convictions, but his heart has to be subservient to his subtle lawyer training. For instance, I think his heart told him that Ireland should be conscripted, but his lawyer training bade him " Beware."

I think that to understand Mr. George even in a small measure it is necessary to look at his early training and experiences, as well as his early environment. It explains a little his temperament and his antagonism to the land-owners.

Our Lloyd George was born in Manchester in 1863, son of one William George, master of Hope Street Unitarian Schools, Liverpool, but his health obliged him to leave cities and return to dear, peaceful, sleepy little Haverford-west in Wales, which is a little village for which I cherish tender memories. William George started farming there in a small way, but died quite early in life, leaving the farm, children and work to his widow. Money troubles followed, and the home was sold up. Though very young at the time, the sorrow and indignity of this was felt by young George. He did his little best to help in household matters, and dug up the potatoes, trying to aid his mother in every possible way.

A kind old cobbler uncle now came to the rescue and asked them to share his home in North Wales at Llanystymdwy, where Lloyd George grew to love the sound of rushing waters as they poured down from the mountains. He also grew to love his old uncle, who was a great character in his way, and is responsible for much that we see to-day in our Prime Minister. The uncle was a Nonconformist of rather a pronounced order, and grounded his nephew well in his principles, which resulted in the boy defying his Sunday School teachers, saying he objected to their dogma ; it did not coincide with the teaching of his uncle.

The old cobbler took great interest in his nephew and wished if possible to give him some education and a good start in life. With this object in view the kind old man saved up all his money and spent his hard-earned savings on Lloyd George, who, thanks to it and his own ambition,

at twenty-one found himself a solicitor, but without enough money left over to buy the necessary robe with which to appear in court. The amount required was not formidable, being about three pounds. This was quickly earned in an office, and he set forth into the world to do the best he could for himself by his wits. Naturally his sympathies were with the class he had grown up amongst, and he spent his early endeavours in defending the village wrong-doers when they were had up for poaching and taking things that did not belong to them. He was a friend of all defiers of the law. Once he had such a fierce argument with the magistrates sitting on the bench dealing with a poaching case that one after another they left the bench, refusing to consider the case any longer, so Lloyd George, his client and witnesses were left in proud possession of the court. I fancy he must have been turning over in his mind what would be the next best move under the circumstances, when one or two meek magistrates returned saying something about they were sure Mr. George had not yet learned the etiquettes of the courts, and had not intended any disrespect or some such thing; nevertheless George scored.

The first case of any great importance undertaken by this defier of the law and order that he was supposed to be representing and upholding, was over the burial of a Nonconformist who had expressed a wish to rest beside a relation in a churchyard of the Established Church. The red-tape clergy refused to allow any Nonconformist to be buried in *their* churchyard unless it be in the corner where the nameless and suicides rested.

It will be readily grasped how the lawyer lashed himself into fury over this slight, and his feelings when the judge summed up against him. He appealed, triumphed, and, as far as Wales was concerned, his name was made.

I know something of the Welsh, and to those who understand the Welsh Radical temperament thoroughly there is nothing very surprising about Lloyd George.

North Wales, from whence he comes, particularly its western area, is intensely Nonconformist, and the Cad-

burys and their associates have always presumed that there was little difference between Quakerism and Welsh Nonconformity. No greater mistake could be made.

The people of North Wales, like other folk, have their good points and their bad, but certainly their intense patriotism as members of the British Empire could never be questioned. Their love of Wales is deep, passionately deep, but a fight against ruthless oppression always did and always will instantly appeal to them. Austere Nonconformity has, in the opinion of many, brought a dreary note into their lives, and the prevailing minor key in their music is characteristic, but the old fighting spirit is as firmly embedded as ever, and the average North Welshman has little sympathy with international Quakerism or any form of internationalism in the political sense.

There is a wide gap between them and the Southern Welsh in this feeling, simply because North Wales is very largely agricultural and residential, practically clear of the welter of industrialism as it is understood in the densely populated mining areas of the South.

Mr. George is very largely North Welsh in his views and the very antithesis of wild-cat Socialism, and thoroughly individualistic. His personality and fighting spirit have won for him the affection of his constituents that will take some shaking. I suppose we must still call him a Radical, but with reservations. He has grown Conservative instincts, though I feel sure he would repudiate any such suggestion.

In his youth he was much loved after the cold, stern, restricted fashion of that era, and the impulsive, impressionable boy was in a measure thrown back upon himself, obliging him to form his own theories, come to his own conclusions, exercise the art of self-repression and the hiding of his real feelings. He is a past-master in the latter to this day. Another factor that has had an influence on the Premier's character is that in normal times North Wales supplies thousands of men to the Mercantile Marine, a service which has a fascination for its youth, born within

sound of the breaking waves, and there are no more loyal people than its sailors. Amongst these loyal folk his early days were spent.

Everything appertaining to Wales is a matter of real interest to Lloyd George. He fought earnestly for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales, for he very naturally said, "Why should Nonconformists support a Church to which they were no party?" The Bishop of St. Asaph held different views, on which he spoke long and earnestly. Lloyd George, taking a leaf out of his book, did the same.

There is rather a well-known story in connection with this campaign between the Bishop and Lloyd George. In hopes that some do not know it, I venture on its repetition.

There was a big meeting, I forget where, and Lloyd George was going to speak and expose the fallacy of some of the Bishop's arguments and principles. By way of opening the ball, Lloyd George's introducer said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, we all know the Bishop is a great liar, but thank God we have a match for him in Lloyd George."

One of the latter's peculiarities is that while he fights hard he almost invariably smiles and is good friends, or wishes to appear to be good friends, directly he has had his say. I have known occasions when this smile has exasperated people into being rude.

His repartee is well known and generally to the point, though not quite on a level with that of Sir Robert Peel, who in 1848, when Feargus O'Connor was denying the statement which had been made that he was a Republican, added that he did not care whether the Queen or the Devil was on the throne, Sir Robert Peel replied, "When the Hon. Member sees the sovereign of his choice on the throne of these realms, I hope he will enjoy, as I am sure he will deserve, the confidence of the Crown."

Here is one of Lloyd George's, quite neat, but scarcely so well rounded and parliamentary.

It was at a meeting in Wales. Mr. George stepped on to the platform and began, "I am here——" but was at

once interrupted by a man from the centre of the room saying, " So am I." " Yes," replied Lloyd George, " but you are not *all* there ! "

Another story, but I cannot vouch for the truth of it, and it came from a man who is not an admirer of our Prime Minister, who had been speechifying about giving Home Rule to Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Someone said, " Oh yes, and give Home Rule to Hell."

The reply came quickly, " Quite right, every man for his own country."

It is not always easy to have a suitable repartee ready just at the moment we want it, but when the opportunity has passed they race through one's brain.

The Old Age Pension Act with all its faults appealed very strongly to North Wales, where 5s. can be made to go further than in most parts of the country. Lloyd George scored heavily with it. One old woman who confided her fears for her future to her Nonconformist minister, on being told to lean on Providence, replied she would rather lean on Lloyd George's five bob. He is that *rara avis*, a prophet who has attained to honour in his own country, and he has the good quality of not forgetting the friends of his youth and his flight upwards in political life.

One of the men who appreciated his abilities and capabilities, predicting a great future for him, was the late Sir John Gibson of Aberystwyth. He was a Westmorland man who founded a weekly newspaper called the " Cambrian News " at Aberystwyth. He was a brilliant journalist, and his paper wielded enormous power along the shores of Cardigan Bay.

Absolutely unconventional and fearless, he helped Mr. George in his early career consistently with his powerful pen.

In August, 1912, Mr. George made a special journey to see him, much to Sir John's pleasure, he being then in his declining years. The town, hearing Mr. Lloyd George was dining with Sir John Gibson, soon gathered round the house and clamoured for a brief speech, which was good-naturedly given.

There was a good deal of fuss, it may be remembered, after one of Lloyd George's meetings at Criccieth, when the Suffragettes attempted to make a disturbance. The facts of this rumpus are not fully known. The militants complained of very rough treatment. What really happened was that some of the older men, getting annoyed at what they regarded as the antics of a collection of silly, hysterical girls, administered to them chastisement in that portion of their anatomy which a certain learned judge said not long ago seemed to have been especially designed by the Creator for that purpose.

When Mr. Lloyd George is making speeches in the vernacular in Wales, his biblical allusions are a common feature, for knowledge of the Scripture by means of the Welsh Sunday Schools is very thoroughly instilled into every child. The small farmer or farm labourer living in the most remote district is quite familiar with the Old and New Testament.

It is symptomatic of Welsh feeling that when Mr. A. G. Gardiner in the "Daily News" said things of Mr. Lloyd George that they did not approve, that paper was dropped wholesale in Wales. So bitterly was it felt that it may be years before it is forgotten. I dare say the "Daily News" will be able to survive the calamity.

Admirers of the Prime Minister cannot help feeling a little sorry for him in the throes of so many anxieties. We undoubtedly owe him a deep debt of gratitude for doing what we had no one else with brains and courage enough to do, but at the same time we must remember that much of the ferment, labour unrest and class-hatred he is up against is the result of his own teaching. He has no halo round his head, and lawyer's tricks do not make a statesman. More and more lawyers are finding their way into the House of Commons. There seems to be a general consensus of opinion, however, that lawyers are not either popular or successful in the House of Commons, but I can remember Sir Edward Clarke, directly after Gladstone's speech in introducing the Home Rule Bill in 1893, was brilliant. He

dissected it bit by bit in a most arresting manner, but we have no orators now. In phrase-making I think Mr. Lloyd George can claim a little of Disraeli's art, for he can phrase and paraphrase his speeches so as to suit his audience, especially the masses, for he is full of promise.

When dear stodgy old Campbell-Bannerman picked Lloyd George for one of his Cabinet there was much agitation and cries of what next. He was made President of the Board of Trade. After he had achieved a foothold he became less combative. He rather startled the old parliamentarians by his free-and-easy not to say breezy manner in the House. He would throw a cheery word or two amongst the reporters as he passed them, he had none of the gloomy "Touch-me-if-you-dare" manner some of the long-standing members wear.

When Campbell-Bannerman died Mr. Asquith became Prime Minister—a lawyer again. He made Lloyd George his Chancellor of the Exchequer. His first Budget caused a perfect frenzy, he was called all sorts of names for hitting so hard at the moneyed classes, everybody vowed they would sell their estates and the country would be ruined. Many have sold their estates, and it looks very much as if the country is going to be ruined, though not entirely due to his Budget, but more to his early teaching when he preached revolt, class-hatred, and upheld poachers, little thinking what trouble he was laying up for himself.

The House of Lords laid themselves out to kill his Budget, and he laid himself out to kill the House of Lords, while allowing himself some latitude in plain speaking, telling the House of Lords that they were men who had neither the training, qualifications, nor experience to fit them for their inherited tasks, and that their predecessors had quite possibly as little qualification!

The Lords did not retaliate by saying that they at any rate did not stay in office regardless of their opinion for the sake of £400 a year.

It will be remembered that on April 28th, 1910, just a year after its introduction in the House of Commons, the

House of Lords passed the Budget. I was in the House that memorable night, and Lloyd George came in to hear "The King wills it," which by the way is always given in French, as queer an old custom as the Highland practice of drinking a health with one foot on the table. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was chatty and happy, but if looks could have killed him he would have been dead very quickly. I think he was aware of this, for he wore the smile he adopts when he knows he has been annoying.

Mr. Asquith and Lloyd George had a tremendous programme—simply to do away with the House of Lords. They hoped the King would be on their side and help them to retain some vestige of dignity and caste, but they hoped and looked in vain.

But our Royalties are becoming very democratic, though possibly not from choice. We have the Princess Royal married to the late Duke of Fife, Princess Louise to the late Duke of Argyll, Princess Patricia to Commander Ramsay, to whom she had been attached for some years before the engagement was allowed, or at any rate recognised. There may be another democratic wedding before long, but whether it will be approved or carried out in private remains to be seen.

Little Prince John was by nature democratic. He rather took the breath away of his tutors and governesses by his early breaking away from the beaten track. More than once when addressed as "Your Royal Highness" or "Prince John" he replied, "My name is John." Once in his nursery days when told "Little princes must not behave like that," he told those in authority he was not a little prince but plain John, so he could do as he liked. At this moment the Queen entered the room and said, "And I am John's mother, and he must do as he is told."

The young Princes are becoming popular, and promise to follow in the steps of their grandfather, who was interested in and encouraged sport in most of its branches, which won the hearts of his people. They felt he was human.

But to return to Lloyd George. There are some traits in his character I have found hard to understand. His inaccuracy, for instance, has on several occasions required some spirited explaining away, and it has detracted from his brilliancy. Again, whatever made him, in many ways a shrewd man of business, do such a risky thing while Chancellor of the Exchequer and responsible for the country's finances as invest in Marconi shares? It was most unfortunate and naturally occasioned considerable comment. Of course it was enquired into, and many who asked for an explanation wished they had held their tongues, for Lloyd George has a way of hitting back. If I remember rightly Lord Selborne had some questions to ask and looked rather small when Lloyd George had done with him, for his position, according to Lloyd George, was much less satisfactory than his own! Personalities were bandied about somewhat recklessly.

Shortly before the war the House spoke to Mr. George about his inaccuracies and libels on individuals. This appeared to amuse him greatly, and he replied by indulging in a few more.

Time and circumstances have wrought changes in us all; our views have changed, which is only natural to all thinkers, for the times have been changing rapidly, but it is at all times painful to see individuals who have reached fame by the ladders of friends in a position to help them, when they have arrived at the top, push the ladder away or throw it down. We have seen this happen many times, especially amongst politicians, and it was an unpicturesque act of Mr. Lloyd George's when he forgot how much he owed to Mr. Asquith and decided to throw him over and reign in his stead, for it was under Asquith's leadership that Lloyd George had risen to fame.

Probably he felt it would be best for the country, and there are many who will agree with this view, but we are still too near the mountains to see the top of them.

We cannot get away from the fact that he had been working towards this goal for some time. It must have

been in his heart many times before it became an accomplished fact.

It was an unpleasant moment when Lloyd George forced Mr. Asquith's hand, and many felt sympathy with the elderly statesman being kicked out.

I am sorry for anybody that stands in Mr. George's way. He will have a poor time, and with perhaps one exception is certain to go down, but much depends on whether the Prime Minister keeps his electioneering promises. If he does not he may be the one to go down.

The Northcliffe and Lloyd George's attitude is an interesting one to watch. At one time they were great allies. It remains to be seen which is the most loyal, for both have so much they could say, and the question is who will come out on top? I rather think I know—I might even dare to bet on it in a mild way.

That delightful and incurable cynic Mr. Labouchere once said to me, referring to Mr. Lloyd George, "His accuracy may be relied upon when quoting Scripture."

Some of Mr. Labouchere's sayings were decidedly cryptic. I remember asking him if a certain member of the House of Commons struck him as being a great diplomatist. He replied, "I do undoubtedly, but I seldom listen to what he says or believe him if I do." I suggested nobody was expected to take what diplomatists said in *nuda veritas*. He then discoursed about diplomacy in a most interesting manner and gave me some brilliant examples of what to me seemed very like making black look white and bamboozling the unwary.

Count Hayashi, Japan's clever representative in this country for some years, used to say the true diplomat combines the subtlety of the serpent with the simplicity of the dove. He also said that in Oriental diplomacy there was no room for scruples. It seems to me that axiom applies to all diplomacy and in every country.

Most of the stories I have known anything about have not been, to my way of thinking, very nice. The following is one which I am bringing out of the dark-room of my memory

where it has been standing with its face to the wall amongst other negatives, some of which must always stay there, for they are too sad. The only possible way of telling this story is by changing names and places.

Florence was a very intimate friend of mine; if there was one profession more than another she disliked and despised it was diplomacy. She said for a man to spend his time swearing black is white or white is black and thinking himself clever when deceiving people and playing dirty tricks was contemptible. The principle of doing evil that good may come did not appeal to her: and yet fate decreed that she should marry one of the profession she despised and do her share of intriguing into the bargain.

Colonel Cato was staying at Shepherd's Hotel, Cairo, hoping to regain health and shake off the fever and ague that had made him a wreck. It was here he met Florence, whom the doctors had sent out for the winter, as her chest was not very strong. Her married sister was doing chaperon.

Florence and Colonel Cato both being idle and having nothing else to do, proceeded to fall in love with one another at first sight, as the novelists say, though I have grave doubts that such a thing ever really happens. However, even if it was not first sight, it progressed very rapidly, for they were engaged at the end of three weeks, and married in three months, with some state and pomp, at a church in Mayfair, perhaps I had better not say where.

Colonel Cato had very little money, but was considered a rising man, profoundly clever with his lying, and greatly assisted by having an angelic cast of countenance; he really looked as if it was quite impossible for him to even prevaricate or do any of the things so desirable in his branch of the service. He was a man of great determination and ambition, meaning to arrive at the top of the tree somehow, it was only want of money that held him back.

Florence had some money of her own, which had been left to her by her mother, so that was a little help; but her husband said if he was to get on he must cut a dash, no big posts were ever given to poor people, only to those

the Government thought did not want them, but with his wife's money, connections and appearance he hoped to do great things.

He was very proud of his partner, who was tall and graceful, with a beautiful complexion. With her help he hoped to bring off some coup of sorts, and get an appointment somewhere nearer than H——, where he was due at the end of his six months' leave. With this end in view they took one of the small houses in a very favourite part of London, and entertained everybody likely to be any use to them either at home or abroad.

Having had a good deal of experience in dealing with princes, rajahs, chiefs, pashas and big-wigs in other lands, the Authorities were glad of Colonel Cato's assistance, and were greatly impressed by the judicious remarks he occasionally dropped of how the Prime Minister had said certain important and very private things to him when they were having a little friendly stroll together; "he *must* be an important person if the Prime Minister treats him so confidentially."

Besides, his wife was a very charming person, and these parties were so well done, they might do worse than keep him at home altogether, perhaps in the Office! At any rate, they must most certainly keep him at home until after the big —— commission in the summer, when so many potentates were expected. In addition to this, nobody knew so well as he did the boundaries of the different states and about the oil springs the Authorities wished to purchase.

Flo was full of admiration for her spouse, his cleverness and brilliancy, also the way he turned all the "Bloods," as he called them, round his little finger; at times she wondered how he managed to do so much on their comparatively limited means, but asked no questions, being quite blind with affection and admiration for him, he was so good to her, and so full of appreciation for anything she did or tried to do for him.

How amusing it really was! The men were so silly, so easily bamboozled, swallowing all her flattery, peacocking

about on the tips of their toes, and doing exactly what she wished them to do.

She had, however, one thorn in her bed of roses, in the form of a Mr. Fairfax, another political who had been given to her husband to help him during the Commission. Why she disliked him she did not know, but after sitting in judgment on her feelings, came to the conclusion it was because she fancied sometimes he sneered at her husband and disliked him—how dare he or anybody else dislike such a brilliant man as her husband!

One evening she had gone up to her room for the night, leaving Mr. Fairfax and her husband in the smoking-room arranging the details of who was to meet who at the station in the following week when everybody was to arrive in connection with the Commission; she had left them each with a huge sheet of paper in front of him, on which they were also marking down a table of precedence for all these nobles, as it would be very serious if any mistake was made about that most important matter, and might quite easily throw down the whole meeting.

Hearing rather loud voices, she thought they sounded very cheery and having huge jokes of sorts, then they grew louder, so she went to the top of the stairs which looked into the front hall. Just as she reached the banisters to look over, the smoking-room door was thrown open, and out walked Mr. Fairfax, speaking angrily. She clearly heard him say, "I refuse to have anything to do with it; do your own dirty work!" He then seized his hat and coat, went out of the front door and slammed it.

Going back to her room, she pondered as to whether she had better go down to her husband or go to bed and pretend she knew nothing about it; perhaps as a diplomatist's wife the best thing would be not to know.

When her husband came up, he made no reference to the episode, only saying he was very tired and sleepy, which she interpreted thus, "I do not wish to talk."

At breakfast next morning he hardly spoke, which was most unusual, but when he went to give her his usual kiss

before leaving the house for his work, he said, "That Fairfax is a bad-tempered chap, I am very anxious to keep him in a good temper just now; ask him to dine with you alone one night this week, the sooner the better, and when you have fixed it up, call through to me on the 'phone, and I will arrange to dine at the club so that you will have plenty of time undisturbed to get him into a good temper. I expect he is a bit jealous of me, I am getting on so well, thanks to my beautiful, clever wife. But the chap's a fool, he is so very junior."

"All right, Ted, I will do my best," and she sat down at once and wrote the following letter as nearly as I can remember it:—

No. ——,
MAYFAIR, W.

DEAR MR. FAIRFAX,

I am all alone to-night—take pity on me and come to dinner 8.30. I have some lovely new songs which will, I think, suit your voice; we will try them over after dinner; I will practise the accompaniments this afternoon. Ted is away, and I want to have a long talk with you; I may be able, I think, to do you a good turn. Come and I will explain; I am growing such a diplomatist, I never commit myself on paper!

Sincerely yours,
FLORENCE CATO.

P.S.—Send word back by bearer if you are in, if not, telephone to me before one o'clock, after which time I shall be out.

The answer came back by bearer:

DEAR MRS. CATO,

Thank you so much for your kind note. I am sorry I cannot dine with you to-night; but will you have tea with me at 5.30 this evening at Harrod's Stores? I have to be down there then to see about a heap of things that

are wanted for the arrivals, for as you know some of the princes and chiefs are going to stay at hotels, and I have to see everything is all right—prayer-mat for one, spittoon for another, and so on, but really, joking apart, I shall be glad when it is all over.

Sincerely yours,

H. FAIRFAX.

Flo sat down with this note in her hand, and read it twice. It did not take her long to grasp the fact that he had given no reason for not responding to her purposely rather intimate little invitation. It was evident he would not break bread in the house of the man he had fallen out with, but he appeared to owe her no grudge.

Yes, certainly she would meet him and have tea at Harrod's, and sent word to that effect, then rang up her husband and told him what was arranged, so that he could come home to dinner if he liked.

About 5.30 she arrived at Harrod's, and began wandering about among the portmanteaux and despatch-boxes near the restaurant (for it was before the rooms were moved upstairs), awaiting Mr. Fairfax. He did not keep her long, and came swinging along, quite happy and boyish, which relieved her mind a good deal.

While they had tea, she did her very best to win his confidence, saying how much her husband appreciated his talent, how he relied on him, and all the rest of the patter necessary on these occasions, but the moment she mentioned her husband's name he at once froze and became monosyllabic. Presently, however, he threw out what she imagined was meant for a hint, by saying, "Diplomacy is a dangerous, rotten game, and if some people I know are not careful they will get themselves into a mess, and generally disliked—but I do not want to talk shop—I am sick to death of it, but," and here he looked very earnestly into Mrs. Cato's eyes, "I do most sincerely hope you will not under any circumstances allow yourself to be mixed up with any infernal intrigues."

Now Flo knew that diplomatists always look for a motive or some double meaning, even if you only say, "How do you do?" or "It is very mild for the time of year!" So she knew there was something behind what he said, that there was a motive, and believed it was jealousy for her husband's position, so she must work him round; Ted must not have a single enemy if she could help it, so rising to go in a most natural manner, she said, "Oh! by the way, would you like that post at H—— we were speaking of the other day, if it can be worked? I do not think it is filled yet. The pay is good. I think my husband and I could work it for you, as Ted has had the offer of something else which we are not allowed to mention just yet."

"Thank you a thousand times, dear Mrs. Cato. You are awfully good, but—well," here he paused, biting his lips in an idle, abstracted sort of way, and then said, "I will tell you another time, if I may, I must be off now. I am really most grateful to you, and, if I may, will let you know in a few days."

Florence went home, feeling she had not been altogether a success, and there was something in the wind. When she reached home she found her husband dressing for dinner, so she looked into his room as she passed to tell him she feared she had not been able to do very much. He kissed her and said, "Never mind, dear, don't bother about the boy; he's a fool."

After dinner, when sitting over the smoking-room fire, her husband took her hand, saying, "Little woman, I'm in a fearfully tight corner, and must have some money from somewhere, and very soon, or I shall not be able to hold on until I get my new appointment. It is most important that there should be no *exposé* of our financial position, or all my years of labour will be thrown away; nothing is ever given to a man who is in difficulties, or to one whose domestic relations are not happy; they must at any rate appear to be happy. The latter is all right, dear, is it not? But the money matters are a cause of grave anxiety, and I want you to help me, you are so splendid! But for you I should not be where I am, you are so clever and tactful."

"Dear old Ted, of course I will do anything to help you."

"What a lucky man I am to have such a wife! How few there are I could speak to as I can to you. Well, darling, it is this way. On Monday we have to go and meet all these foreign potentates; I am to meet the Prince of the Cannibal Isles, and after all the ceremonies are over I want to bring him here and introduce him to you; I will then be called away by accident, and leave you alone with him."

"Yes, Ted, and then——?"

"And then—I leave it in your able hands. I do not think I need say anything more. The Prince speaks very fair English; you might in the course of conversation say you know that I, Colonel Cato, take the greatest interest in his share of the arrangements now before the Authorities, and think it will be a shame if his affairs are interfered with. Draw him out if you can, but I warn you, Orientals can see as far as most of us; there is not much we can teach them in the way of intrigue. Be as friendly as you dare. I can safely leave you to manage this; he will know what is expected of him in return for our help and hospitality. He may be so grateful that he will wish to shower jewels on you, to which, of course, I should have to object, they call these things by such ugly names; so you see, dear, if you go in for any little indiscretions I must not know, but you could, if you are wanting a little extra money, lodge the little presents in your bank as security. Do you see? Eh?"

There was silence in the room—a silence that could be felt, and Colonel Cato evidently felt uncomfortable, perhaps he was sitting in too low a chair, so he stood up, pulled down his waistcoat, and moved over to the big pier glass, where he could see how his wife was taking it, without actually looking at her, which, for some strange reason, and for the first time in his life since he had known her, he now seemed disinclined to do, but he could see her plainly in the glass—she was sitting just where he left her, absolutely motionless, gazing at the beads on the toe of her shoe.

Colonel Cato, to pass the time until his wife had digested

—the beads on the toe of her shoe, was making diplomatic faces in the glass, rehearsing them to himself—the smile of greeting, dignified and "because I must" sort of smile; the weary smile of boredom meant to say, "Your preamble has lasted quite long enough, for pity's sake dry up!"; the severe frown of injured innocence when matters were going a little too fast.

At this point he saw his wife move, so with a yawn put on for the occasion, which he pretended to stifle so as to sound very natural and quite at ease, he said, "You're tired, old girl——" but was interrupted by his wife rising and coming towards him with quite a new expression on her face, and one he did not like or think becoming; she might have looked like that if he had struck her—or been unkind —but really——

His wife now stood beside him, and was saying, "Yes, Ted, I think I understand," and then, putting her hand on his arm, "but is there no other way? I shall feel so dreadful."

"No, Flo, I would not have asked you to help me if there had been any other way out; I have been trying to manage for a long time without having to worry you, indeed, I have already made one or two little arrangements to keep going, which if they come to light—and I cannot keep people quiet—will just about wipe me off the slate, and it would be such a shame when so nearly at the top, and all for want of a little paltry money.

"It is really quite usual, old girl; some people get grateful thanks and returns every day for arranging their little matters, and I am sure the Prince will be most grateful to you for using your influence with me to have his share in the rearrangement of his affairs brought to a satisfactory conclusion; he knows there is not another soul who really properly understands them but myself."

Another silence.

"Very well, Ted. I never liked the profession, and like it less now than ever—in fact I may say I hate it, but I will see what I can do."

" That is settled then," with a sigh of relief. " You will bring it off all right, I can trust you, you are a born diplomatist, though you swear you hate it so."

Mrs. Cato stayed at home all the Monday that she was expecting the Prince, and had a nervous headache from anxiety. At five o'clock her husband came in, bringing the Prince, whom he introduced. She was agreeably surprised at his good manners and quite possible English ; he put her quite at ease by at once saying how pleasant it was to be once more in England, the most charming country in all the world, and full of such beautiful ladies ; and now he had the still greater pleasure of meeting the beautiful lady he had heard of so often, whose fame had spread to North, South, East and West.

Here for a moment he paused for breath, and poor Flo thought, " Splendid man, but I shall never be able to live up to him ; my only chance will be to begin spouting poetry."

At this point of the proceedings the footman came to say would Colonel Cato go at once to the —— Office, they were calling through the telephone for him.

And he went.

" Now for it," thought Flo, and her hands became cold and clammy. She began by asking how long it was since he was in England before ? Had he seen the people dancing at the Alhambra ? though she knew, of course, quite well he had not. Was he fond of music ?

Then suddenly it flashed through her mind she had never asked her husband how much money he wanted, and this so upset her she found herself answering the Prince quite at random, and had to pull herself together. Tea having been taken away, she felt it was time to begin in earnest, so putting on an intense and interested manner she remarked, " My husband is greatly interested in your affairs, he thinks you are such a splendid ruler, and has been telling them so at the Office, but promise me not to say I have mentioned it to you ; if my husband knows I have spoken to you about it he will be very angry, it is of course a great secret."

The Prince became florid with pleasure, and wriggled about in his chair, crossing and recrossing his legs, until the antimacassar was in a heap on the floor, and he had kicked the leg of the little table by Flo's seat, upsetting the flower-vase containing a beautiful Marshal Neil rose which had over-balanced and was standing on its head on the table, while the water was running about among the books and precious things.

The Prince had vowed by all his gods he would never mention anything that was told him, so then Flo tried again. "Tell me all about your beautiful country, which I long to see, and your beautiful palaces; it must be lovely to be as rich as you are. I hear you have also the most splendid jewels in the world. Will you wear them while you are in England? I should so much like to see them. My husband cannot afford to give me lovely things to wear, so I admire them all the more on other people." Here Flo picked up the rose, with a thoughtful air, and replaced it in the vase, right side up.

"Ah, beautiful lady, when you know me better, you will perhaps allow me to send you a few little things from my country. I have already brought some presents for different people in this land. I would like to show them to you."

"Now, dear Mr. Prince, you will be late for your dinner and so shall I, if we talk any longer. I have had a most pleasant evening, and shall look forward to seeing you again soon. Good-bye."

Here the Prince stood up, clasped his hands together above his head, and rocked himself backwards and forwards smiling, with his eyes shut in ecstasy, then opening them cried, "Oh! oh! peautiful lady, you call me dear Mr. Prince. Oh! oh! how peautiful! I have never before been called 'dear Mr. Prince'; it is so peautiful! Oh, say it once again, and let me kiss your hand!" In his excitement some of the English accent slipped here and there.

Flo rang the bell, which was answered so promptly she felt certain the servants had been listening at the door.

As soon as the visitor had gone she rushed up to her room straight to the looking-glass to see if she looked just the same, for she felt she must have changed entirely in appearance after going through such an anxious time. She hoped she had gone far enough, it would not do to be too profuse on the first visit.

Meanwhile her husband was very pleased with her, and said, "The Prince is telling everybody what a charming lady you are." Nearly every day she met her new admirer somewhere, and he was quite convinced he had won the lady's heart, she had become so confidential, and when one evening they were sitting out on the balcony at a big reception given on purpose for the foreign royalties, he brought out of the folds of his embroidered jacket a case of something which he pressed into her hand, saying it was a little present to the lady of his kindest friend, a little gift of gratitude. Flo put the case quietly back into his hand, saying how very kind it was of him to wish her to have the little present, but her husband would be very angry if she took presents from other men, and that Colonel Cato was only doing what was right by pressing the Prince's rights on the Authorities at home, as he was such a perfect ruler, and so loyal to our country.

The Prince edged his chair a little nearer, the light was rather dim, and Flo felt frightened; he had opened the case, and even in the half-light a necklace of gorgeous rubies caught her eye. She took them into her hands to admire, never having seen such large stones before, or so beautifully set, but she firmly shut the case and returned them, saying her husband would be so angry, she really dare not take them, she would never dare wear them.

Here the Oriental cunning came to the fore, for, putting his head nearer, he said in a low voice, "But the husband must not know," adding, "It is not wise that husbands should know everything that peautiful ladies do. If the lovely lady will not have my little things from my Island, what can her slave do to please her and show his respectful adoration, so that the jealous husband shall not know?"

"Well, dear kind Mr. Prince, if you think you could do it without my husband finding out, I should be glad if I had a little more money to buy pretty things for myself, and that would not get me into trouble."

"Of course it shall be so. When shall your slave send the little thing? Where shall the bank be?"

"Hush! Do not let anybody hear you. I have an envelope in my pocket; if you have a pencil I will write down the address for you. How kind you are to your little English friend."

"Good evening, Mrs. Cato," said a voice behind her. "Will you come and have some coffee? I fear you may catch cold out here; it has turned very chilly!"

"Really, Mr. Fairfax, how you startled me! You nearly made me bite my tongue. I did not see or hear you come, but now you are here I wonder if you will kindly send for our carriage, I have a headache and wish to go home," and, wishing the Prince good night, she took Mr. Fairfax's arm and went downstairs.

On the way home she wondered if Mr. Fairfax saw her give the envelope with the address written on the back to her companion, and if he did, surely there was nothing in that—it might have been an order for the Zoo, or anything—it was her conscience making her uneasy.

Her new friend was as good as his word, for by the last post the very next day came a letter from Messrs. Infant & Co., Bankers, saying the sum of £10,000 had been paid into her account; was it to be placed to Colonel Cato, as she had no account there? They awaited her instructions. If she wished to open a separate account, perhaps she would kindly call and sign her name in their book, so that they might be familiar with her signature.

The very first spare moment she went to the bank, having arranged with her husband it would be better to keep it in her own name, and she signed her bold signature in the book kept on purpose.

The manager was very obsequious, and came to the door of the bank with her. Would she like a cab called? But

no, she would rather walk. She was experiencing such a variety of strange and new sensations, she wished to walk and think. Walking, however, did not please her, she wanted to stand still and think. This of course she could hardly do in the middle of the pavement, so she walked up to the nearest shop window and stared in with unseeing eyes. What had happened to her? What had she done? All the morning she had felt ashamed, and went red to the roots of her hair when anybody spoke to her, or if anybody looked at her. She went into the bank with her knees shaking under her, turning hot and cold alternately.

And now in a few moments only she had signed her name, and all nervousness had gone; she came out of the bank feeling proud and happy, with all shame gone. What had brought about this pleasing change? Was it, could it be simple possession did it? Or was it relief that the finishing stroke had been put to an anxious game? Or was it because now all would be easy for her dear Ted? She came at last to the conclusion it was a feeling of relief now it had all worked out so well, and having arrived at this conclusion was able to continue her journey home, and not till then did she discover she had been standing staring at a window full of Messrs. Tiger's jam tarts, scones and puffs so unseeing had been her eyes.

How splendidly everything had turned out! How lovely to have all debts paid, plenty in hand, and the Prince only too anxious to heap more on her; but he was causing her some anxiety; he was growing so familiar, and when she and her husband were talking over the situation, she explained this to him, and said how petted and like a spoilt child he had become if she was not alone when he called to see her.

Colonel Cato pointed out how soon the Prince would be returning to his own country, and that if he became too pressing the only thing would be, she must have appendicitis or influenza and be unable to see him; and he would order a load or two of straw to be put down outside the house; the man could not after that be annoyed if he did not see her when he called.

But she decided that she could not be spared to have any illness just then, with so many jealous, quarrelsome people about, and as soon as it became known her man was to be made a K.C.B., and had been given the coveted post of Chief Commissioner at ——, everybody would be rabid, and she must hold her retaining fee for him by keeping eyes and ears open—forewarned being forearmed.

Sitting busily answering invitations one morning, she suddenly remembered she had never answered the letter her husband had pushed into her hand just as he started for the big reception given in honour of all the Royalties; he had said it was a begging letter, of which he received many, and she had put it in her pocket and used the envelope to write the address on the back of it for the Prince that night on the balcony. What on earth had she done with the inside? She must ask her husband who it was from, and see if it was important.

Hearing the door open behind her, without looking up she said, "Is that you, Ted?"

"Yes, I have just had an urgent note from the Office; they wish to see me on a matter of some importance which they trust I shall be able to explain. Hope to Heaven they have not got wind of our little transaction; they call these things by such silly names—bribery, corruption, and so on."

Hardly had her husband left her when Mr. Fairfax was announced, full of apologies for being so early. He was looking very worried, and green with it.

"What on earth is the matter, Mr. Fairfax? Are you ill?"

"Yes! No! Oh, both! But can I speak to you where no servants can hear us?"

"Come through into my boudoir. We shall be safe there."

"Dear Mrs. Cato, you have always been so kind to me, I thought I would come and tell you—no, warn you—no, to explain to you. I don't know how to put it. Your husband is my boss for the time, and though I have several

times refused to do things which I consider a little outside the latitude allowed in diplomacy, and we have had differences of opinion, yet I have received so much kindness in this house from you both, I want to tell you."

"Yes, yes! Go on! What are you beating about the bush for? If there is anything you want to say, for goodness' sake say it, and have done with it."

"Perhaps that will be best. The authorities have got hold of a story, something about Prince —— having bribed your husband by a large cheque to arrange certain things in his favour. It is very awkward, for it certainly has been arranged very favourably for the Prince, and the smaller fry are discontented and up in arms, and one of them has somehow got hold of an envelope with your husband's name and address on it, and at the back of it his banker's address.

"As far as I can gather, the Prince was being watched, and he was seen to write a big cheque and send it to his bank. Of course, if this can be proved, it will be the end of Cato's services in the diplomatic service, or any other service I expect for that matter, so I just came away the first moment I could be spared to see if you knew anything about the cheque, and if I could be any use."

"No doubt you mean it very kindly, Mr. Fairfax, but it is really too absurd. Certainly not! My husband would have nothing to do with any such transaction. They must all be mad!"

"But surely there must be some grounds for this suspicion, and if there is I do beg you to tell me if you know anything about this cheque. I would like to try and save —the boss—if possible, but my hands are tied by working in the dark, and it is such a serious matter—not a moment to be lost. I have very grave fears your husband has done something irregular, for before these people came over, he asked me to arrange something of the kind for him, as he was so hard up, but I declined, and told him to do his dirty work himself."

Flo said, "Perhaps I had better tell you the Prince gave *me* a present as a little return for all the trouble we have

taken to make this visit pleasant; we have been put to great expense, and are not rich people, so it is really quite proper."

Mr. Fairfax rose, and began walking up and down the room excitedly, lighted a cigarette, and began smoking without asking permission, though he was in the boudoir; he did it mechanically, hardly knowing what he was doing.

Stopping suddenly in front of Flo, he said, "How does it happen Prince —— has, or rather had, an envelope addressed to Colonel Cato, and on the back of it written, 'Send to Messrs. Infant & Co.' They are, I believe, your bankers?"

"Pray do not be too melodramatic, the answer is simple enough. My husband, as is his wont when begging letters arrive, handed it to me to answer. It happened to be in my pocket at the time Prince —— asked where he might send my little present, and I wrote the address on the back. It had nothing whatever to do with my husband. Nothing so very criminal after all, is it?" and she gave a laugh meant to be careless.

Still Fairfax strode up and down the room lost in thought, then throwing his cigarette into the fender, he came up close to Flo and said very quietly and gravely, "It's too thin."

"Who is too thin? What is too thin?"

"I strongly advise you, Mrs. Cato, to give up fencing with me, and while there is still time help me to save your husband from ruin. The authorities will think it just as bad your having received presents as if it had been sent to your husband; but I think if you can keep your head and give up pretending, I may be able to pull him through. He must say that cheque was given to you for charity. Is there any particular charity you are interested in? Did I not see your name the other day heading a list of subscriptions for the Society for Prevention of Criminals?"

"Yes, I am the secretary."

"Good! You keep a receipt-book, I presume?"

"Yes."

"Well, sit down and write a receipt made out to the Prince and date it the day he paid the cheque into your bank. Be quick. Give it to me and I will take it to the Prince to produce, if asked any questions, if only I can get there in time to prevent him giving the show away. He must say he gave it to you for charity, and you placed it in your bank temporarily. Meanwhile you must go to the bank and tell them they are only to hold it until you have arranged which charity you decide is most deserving of help, out of the many you are interested in."

"Mr. Fairfax, you really are great. What a brain you have!"

"I must go at once, Mrs. Cato. If anybody asks to see you, say you are not well enough to see them, for the less said at present the better."

"May I ask before you go what put this idea into people's heads that my husband had been bribed by the Prince?"

"Never mind about that now. Did I hear the telephone? Will you see if it is Colonel Cato wishing to speak to you? I shall know then better what he has said."

Flo went to the telephone, and returned, saying it was from the bank, stating enquiries had been made as to whether a cheque for £10,000 had been paid in by Prince —— to Colonel Cato's account. They had replied "No," and now wish to know what my instructions are, so I told them it was quite all right, the cheque for £10,000 paid into my account by the Prince was only to be held temporarily for me by them, as it was given for a charity, and they could say so if they were asked."

"Capital," replied Fairfax. "Now we shall, I hope, be able to work it, if I can get hold of the Prince." He then rushed downstairs, taking the receipt with him.

What a perfectly horrible day she had spent! Her head felt as if it was opening and shutting; she was deadly cold, and began to think she was going to be ill in reality. She wondered what her husband was doing; why had he not been to tell her what had happened? How well the bank had behaved! They had not given away that most of the

money was spent, or that a cheque had been paid in to her account, simply stated no big cheque had been paid into Colonel Cato's account.

It was quite unbearable, waiting in this uncertainty; she would go to the bank and tell them it would be all right, and they must refuse to give any answers as to her private account. Having made up her mind to do this, she felt better, and proceeded to put it into execution, having the immense satisfaction of being told by one of the firm of bankers that they should not dream of giving any information about her private account to anybody; it would be most irregular.

So she returned home to await events. Dinner-time came and still no Ted, and no message from him. What could it all mean? It would never do to call through to the Office on the telephone—it would look as if she was anxious.

At last at 10.30 she heard the latchkey in the front door; she listened intently to hear if there were any voices, in case her husband had brought some one back with him, but heard nothing except her husband's step coming very slowly towards the drawing-room. She arose to go and meet him, and exclaimed, "Darling, how late you are. Have you had any dinner?"

There was no reply. He put his arm through hers, and drew her down on to the sofa by him, throwing his arms round her, and buried his face in her neck. Still he did not speak. She felt something dreadful had happened, but must wait his time to explain, so she stroked his hair, and held him tight to her in loving sympathy, saying, "Dear old boy, you are worn out; you must have a strong whisky and soda, and then we will discuss it all. Remember nothing really matters so long as we are together."

She rang the bell for the whisky and soda; when it arrived he drank it eagerly and seemed refreshed. He had sat down in his favourite chair when the servants were bringing in the tray; as soon as they had gone she knelt on the floor by him, resting her head in his lap. He then

broke down for a moment, but quickly recovering himself said, " Dear old girl ; precious little wife ; it's all over, I'm broke."

" Oh is that all ! What matter ? But try and tell me, dear. You always say you feel better when we have discussed things."

" I must begin," he replied, " at the beginning, or you won't understand. You remember they called through from the Office, wishing to see me on important business ? When I got there I was greeted with a cold, suspicious sort of manner, and asked if I could explain about a cheque for £10,000 being placed to my account by Prince ——.

" Of course I told them he had never done anything of the kind ; I received no cheque, and had never been offered one. It was then suggested, ' You will then have no objection to my sending for the Prince and asking him to explain about this cheque, and how he came by your bankers' address written on the back of your envelope ? '

" I replied, ' By all means send for him,' though I felt sick to death, not knowing what the beggar would say, they have so many little games of their own to play generally.

" Fairfax was sent to bring the Prince ; we waited what seemed an eternity, and I was afraid Fairfax would be dead against me.

" At last he returned, and came in looking pretty disagreeable, the Prince waddling after him all smiles, as if it was one of the moments of his life.

" He was asked very politely if he could throw any light on the fact that information had reached the Office implying that he, the Prince, had given a cheque to Colonel Cato, knowing such things were against all prescribed etiquette.

" The old chap was splendid—by Jove he was, while I thought everybody in the room must have heard my heart beating. He arose from his seat with a look of pained surprise, and moving slowly towards the door as if for ever to shake off the dust of England, replied, ' No, gentlemen,

and I am surprised you should ask me such a question, and I shall not forget this insult,' buttoning up his coat tight. Jove! Flo, you should have seen them all down on their marrow bones, buzzing round him like bees round their hive.

"Fairfax then said he was sure, in justice to Colonel Cato, the Prince would explain anything he could about the cheque and envelope in question.

"The Prince, with much precision and dignity, moved up to the table and brought out of his pocket-book three receipts, one from Mrs. Gandy-Brown for £10,000, for donation towards the Home for Sick Cats; another for £10,000 from Mrs. Cato, for donation to the Society for Prevention of Criminals; the third from Lady Bradding-linton for £10,000, donation towards her Home for Sick Children. He then said, 'These receipts, gentlemen, were given to me for the £30,000 I wished to give in charity to your great country, and I am deep in emotion that you should have so misread my best wishes.'

"Everybody was profuse with apologies, and the Prince went off with flying colours.

"I was then asked why I did not say you had received a cheque for charity, and prevent them making asses of themselves and offending his highness. I explained I had nothing to do with your charities, your name was in so many lists, and that even if it had been my habit to enquire into their finances, I had been much too busy since the arrival of the foreign visitors to find time for anything of the kind.

"I was then *pardoned*, and sent off on a particularly delicate piece of work that required immediate attention, and now at last here I am."

"Then why, dear, be so depressed? It all panned out beautifully."

"Don't you see, dear child, that £10,000 will have to be replaced at the bank, and paid at once to the credit of the Criminals account, and how am I going to do that? It is bound all to come out, and the last state of this man will

be worse than the first. But for you, I would cut my throat and have done with it."

Flo was very thoughtful for a few moments, and then said, "I have a plan. Don't ask me any questions, but I see a way out. Go down to the smoking-room and pull our pet chairs up to the fire, get my cigarettes ready, and I will join you when I have changed into my tea-gown. But, cheer up, things are not so very black after all."

Colonel Cato went to his den, and his wife flew up to her room and wrote two notes, one addressed to "H. Fairfax, Esq."—it contained, scrawled on a half-sheet of paper, "A thousand grateful thanks. F. C." The other was addressed to "His Highness Prince ——."

—— Hotel, S.W.

Dear Mr. Prince,

How kind you are. I am most anxious to consult you before you leave about the cheque you kindly gave to my Criminal Society. Can you be with me by 10.30 to-morrow—at any rate before 1 o'clock? I want to know if I may divide it among several charities instead of one, and to say good-bye personally to you before you leave in the afternoon.

Your sincere friend,
F. Cato.

Flo then told her maid the two notes were to be taken by hand early next morning, and ask if there were any answers; she then descended to try and comfort her husband.

Hardly had Colonel Cato left the house next morning when the Prince arrived. He stayed about ten minutes, and then drove away, returning at 12.30 with a heavy bag, which was left in the hall while he went up to say good-bye to Mrs. Cato.

The Prince had gone, and Flo had waved a last good-bye to him from the window. She sank into the nearest chair, clasping her hands over her head, and lapsed into reverie

which lasted some time; then with a sigh she rose and picked up her husband's photo off the table, gazed at it for some time, and then laid her face against it and said, "It *was* a near thing."

When Colonel Cato arrived for dinner, he announced he was to be made a Knight Commander of the Tub.

"Rather too late, dear, isn't it?"

Flo whispered, "Not a bit; come to my room, I have something great to tell you."

"Well, now we are in peace make haste and put me out of my pain."

"Oh, Ted, my dearest, it is all right," and putting her arms round her husband's neck completely broke down from relief of the tension and high pressure she had been living at, and history is not quite clear about the state of Colonel Cato's eyes when he learned from his wife she had seen the Prince and told him the cheque he had given her for charities hardly covered all she wished to do, but that if he could make it convenient to send something more, and not in cheque form, the charities would be very grateful and ever remember him with gratitude, and always watch with interest the welfare of his great estates.

And the Prince expressed great gratitude for the peautiful lady being so kind as to distribute for him his little alms. He left a bag in the hall of what he had at the time in cash for charities, and the rest would be paid into Griddlefow's Bank for "Charities as may be desired by Mrs. Cato."

CHAPTER XI

Dora Dennis's childhood—Her God-fearing parents—She runs away—Where she was found—The Vicar mounts the stable ladder—Breathless moments—An awful fall—Mr. Dennis anticipates lock-jaw—The cook anticipates cancer—The doctor called in—Dora leaves home—She becomes a hospital nurse—Is sent to nurse a sick clergyman—Homesick—Forgetful old Moses—The patient asks a question—Dora's reply—Mr. Dennis dies—His will—What happened to Dora in the fog.

I HAVE a great love for animals, children and old people, in fact anything or anybody that is dependent on me for their happiness;. anything helpless appeals to me.

I place the animals first because they are the least disappointing, but children have occupied a large part of my heart. It is curious how early in life character shows itself even in a litter of puppies; while one from the first may be a sulky little beast, another will be cuddlesome and seductive. So it is with children, and I have noticed that the offspring of the clergy often turn out independent and unmanageable. From the North Country alone I could name several to prove this theory of mine. I watched one such child grow up from passionate babyhood to the time of her tragic end. She is another of the negatives from out of my dark room. Her name was Dora Dennis. Though a girl, as may be gathered from her name, at heart and by nature she was a boy, which sounds rather Irish, but is, nevertheless, a trying combination for any child of man, and Dora's masculine tastes soon asserted themselves, filling with horror the hearts of her parents, who expected and would have greatly preferred a very red-tape daughter who would follow in their orthodox footsteps, instead of a little turk who defied them at every turn.

When a very small child, her mother gave her a doll to play with, which she promptly threw on the floor, then made herself quite stiff with rage, and screamed till put down beside it, when, in the true April-shower fashion, the tears stopped and the sun came out in smiles, while she crawled, dragging the doll by the legs until near the fire, and threw it in.

When she hurt herself, instead of crying like most children, she became very angry, spluttered what were, no doubt, swear words, if only her language had been understood, and flew at everybody that came near.

The Dennises, Dora's father and mother, were the most extraordinary couple, prim and proper to the last degree, fearfully righteous and narrow-minded, or, as they expressed it themselves, " God-fearing people," which is far more eloquent than words of mine. Had anybody asked them if they were God-loving people, I feel sure they would have been shocked, and have thought something improper was suggested.

These good people disturbed my devotions in church on Sundays—they fascinated while they repelled me—I could not help looking from one to the other, the parson in the pulpit, and his wife at the harmonium, and wondering how they ever were so human, so mundane, so frisky as to approach each other with a view to marriage! No wonder the result was something unusual, for Dora was unusual, absolutely unlike either parent in any way.

The Rev. Edward Dennis always reminded me of the Cock Robin I remember in my childhood's picture-books, dressed in a surplice, prepared to bury Jenny Wren—the same round, bright eye, same consequential air and general complacency, derived, no doubt, from the narrowness of his mind, and refusing to look any further than the few inches in front of his nose, allowing no wicked contaminating newspaper in his home, except one Evangelical Weekly.

His library was circumscribed, bounded on the north by his Bible, which he took very literally, on the south by somebody's commentaries on it, while east and west were

a few musty old books of sermons. His reverence's addresses from the pulpit can hardly have been called sermons, for he simply expounded the Scriptures, it was not preaching, and as he had no ideas of his own, seemed to find satisfaction in impressing upon his small congregation of simple decent-looking country folk that they were all miserable sinners, inevitably damned and doomed to eternal torture.

During some of these expoundings I looked from the roundabout, complacent little man, who evidently did not include himself amongst the damned, to the awed faces of the simple-minded, uncomplaining poor, with their patient, frugal, toiling lives, and wondered how he dared deal out such cruel, revengeful doctrines in His name, Who would have been so gentle and comforting to them all, Whose words would have been mercy and great loving-kindness. Then my eyes would travel on to Mrs. Dennis, sitting up very straight and stiff in a chair by the harmonium, with colourless face, colourless hair, thin, compressed lips, drab face, drab clothes, and, doubtless, drab mind. People used to say she looked characterless, wherein they made a mistake, for she had a very distinct character of her own, and was most persistent in getting her own way. Dora sat beside her mother, biting her nails to while away the time.

My studies were one Sunday brought sharply to a close during the address by Mr. Dennis waving his hand in the direction of the font at the end of the church where the school children sat, and saying, without, I believe, meaning to address anybody in particular, "Who made that vile body of yours, I ask? Yes! who made that vile body of yours?" Here he paused for effect, with hand still extended. A small, frightened-looking little girl shot up, as she was taught to do in the Sunday-school when addressed, and piped out, with a curtsey, "Please, sir, Mary Jane made body and mother made skirt."—It served the Vicar right! What business had he to speak of any one's body as vile?

No notice of course was taken by anybody but Dora, who twisted round to see who had spoken, and fell off her

seat with a thud, carrying with her a stack of prayer books, hymn books, etc., and her mother's bottle of smelling-salts, which smashed and nearly suffocated all and sundry in the immediate neighbourhood.

As Dora grew older her father informed me he should not send his child, his ewe-lamb, to school to be contaminated, he did not approve of schools for girls, he should teach her himself, and make a Greek scholar of her. Of course there was endless grief, the child was always in disgrace, ending one day in throwing a book in her father's face, and rushing out of the room. No notice was taken at luncheon when no Dora appeared, and it was supposed she was too ashamed to come down, and was repenting of her sins, but when tea-time came and still no Dora, a servant was sent to bring her down, returning shortly to say, " Miss Dora is not there." Bed-time came, still no Dora, everybody went to search for her, and searched all night. The following morning the village pond was dragged, all the kind village people joined in the search ; every likely and unlikely place was searched, it was a most thrilling moment in the life of the village I will call Loughboro'.

Not for two whole days was Dora found, and then only through the garden boy stealing the servants' cheese out of the larder. The cook saw him hanging about the back door and watched him. When all seemed quiet John crept into the larder, helped himself to the cheese and some pieces of bread which were lying in a plate left by the servants from their supper the night before, and crept quietly out again. So cook watched him and observed he went in the direction of the stables ; she kicked off her shoes and followed him. Close to the stables she lost sight of him, but seeing the granary door ajar, gently pushed it and listened, hearing quite distinctly voices overhead where the hay had lately been packed away in big trusses ; so retreating very quietly, she went in search of the Vicar, informing him she believed she had found " Little Missy." A solemn procession started forth in search of the missing daughter : first the cook of noble proportions as pioneer,

then the Vicar puffing and blowing, partly from excitement partly from anger, followed by his wife squinting with suppressed emotion; John was discovered bringing up the rear, but hanging well behind, scenting danger. So far so good, but now the procession had arrived at the granary, who was going to climb that rickety-crazy ladder into the loft? They all looked at one another. The Vicar suggested as the cook made the supposed discovery she should go up and see if her surmise was correct, but cook did not think so, she thought the proper person to risk his neck, and set a good example, was his reverence. His reverence's wife forbade him doing anything so foolish, swearing the child was not worth it. Then a happy inspiration seized cook. Where was John? Ah! there he was, peeping through the hinges of the door; he, of course, was the proper person to climb up; why had they not thought of interrogating John before? "John," shouted the Vicar. "Yes, sir," came a feeble, nervous voice. "Come here." John shuffled in with eyes on the ground. "Cook tells me you have been stealing food from the larder; what have you done with it?" No answer. "You brought it in here and were overheard talking to someone in the loft; who were you talking to?" No answer. "Very well, as you refuse to confess your sins, and I believe you know where Miss Dora is and will not speak, I shall send for a policeman." This was too much for John, who began to cry, and owned he had taken some bread and cheese and some carrots and apples out of the garden to Miss Dora, who was hiding in the hay at the back of the granary, and had asked him to bring her something to eat. "And you knew all yesterday, John, when the pond was being dragged, and everybody hunting for Miss Dora, and you never told us? Do you know you are a very wicked boy, and will end your days in prison?" This was the last straw for John, who expected to see a policeman come up out of the earth at his feet, so with a roar of anguish he turned and fled, and neither entreaties nor threats could stop him.

I am told John ran straight home, rushed into his mother's

cottage, frightening her nearly into fits, and proceeded to barricade the door.

Meanwhile the Vicar stood at the bottom of the ladder commanding his daughter to "come down at once and be severely whipped." Strange to relate she did not immediately respond. This was really most annoying, and growing more and more angry, he announced his intention of going up himself to bring her down; he was going to have no more nonsense, so with much precision and a certain amount of action he was assisted out of his coat by his wife and the cook, who thought he would have greater freedom of limb to clutch the ladder.

He started bravely up the first few steps, his wife imploring him to be very careful, and telling him the ungrateful girl was not worth his risking his valuable neck. But her husband was in no mood for any domestic expression of affection, and turned his head half round with eyes tight shut, while he held on to the ladder with both hands convulsively, and shouted, "Can't you hold your tongue, Maria? don't you see I am in great danger? your chattering will make me nervous in a minute, and it's all your fault, I told you she was being spoilt, and must go to school and be firmly dealt with; you are quite useless with children."

"Well, really, Mr. Dennis," she always called him by his surname with proper prefix, it would have been so familiar to have addressed him as Edward or worse still Ted, "it was you who would not allow her to go to school when I advised it, I think you have forgotten *that*."

"Well, well, *will* you stop arguing when I am in this dangerous position? You will be sorry if I fall down and am killed before your eyes, and I am feeling—very sick—and giddy."

"Well, Mr. Dennis, come down, for goodness' sake, and leave the girl, she will soon get tired of being up there."

"Oh yes, sir, leave her and come down, do," cried cook in tones of entreaty. But the Vicar felt it behoved a man of such character not to give in, so with perspiration standing on his brow he continued his sort of spring-halt action

up the ladder, but it was most fatiguing, his legs being short and round, the steps far apart, and one missing here and there. Oh, they were breathless moments, for the man was much too heavy for such a rickety ladder. It was a long, tiring business, and when both feet at last found their way on to the same step it was an anxious moment to know which of the two it would be best to start off with again.

Eventually, when the watchers below had bursting eyeballs and cricks in their necks with staring at the ascent, the top step was reached, but here an awful problem faced him; there was a big gap between the last step and the trap-door into the loft, which just come on a line with his nose, and if he hoped ever to get inside he must perform acrobatic feats, draw himself up by his hands resting inside the trap-door and swing himself in. This method he explained at some length to his admiring household beneath him, without the very smallest intention of trying it, but neither could he face the return journey. What was to be done?

Peering over the edge of the trap-door, he said it was quite impossible any human being could be there; it was cram-full of hay and cobwebs; would they kindly be silent, he was about to descend? The good women held their breath as first one leg began waving about from the top of the ladder trying to find a step; finding none, the leg was drawn up again with groans and grunts. The other leg then performed the same rotatory motion.

"Well, I can't come down, that is all about it; I shall have to stay here until help comes."

"Dear, oh dear," said cook, "whatever shall we do? I think, sir, if you was to put out one leg I could guide it to the step with this 'ere hay-fork," fetching the implement from the corner where it was standing. So once more the leg began waving about, and giving an extra deep bob to reach a step, cook thought he was falling and, in her haste, feeling that he who hesitates is lost, did not observe when giving a prod to catch what she thought was the falling Vicar, that she had the business end of the fork upwards,

the result of which kind attention was with a loud yell and a word or two he should not have used the Vicar lost his hold and slithered down to the ground in a sort of avalanche, with his arms round the ladder in fond embrace, his feet never touching a step at all; but some remnant of his school days prompted him to twine his legs round the ladder, so that, except that he came down with great speed, he was not much the worse, except for a rather severe prod from the hay-fork just where his trousers were beginning to look shiny.

Both his wife and the cook were more or less injured in their brave attempt to break his fall. Mrs. Dennis was lying on her back, and the cook was nursing her ample figure, swearing it was blows like that which gave people cancer, which always killed them.

Having blamed each other in turns they all tramped home, but without the object of their search. Mr. Dennis declared he felt symptoms of lockjaw approaching, so the doctor was sent for, and after having bathed the punctures made by the fork, and assured Mrs. Dennis that she was only bruised and the cook had no immediate signs of cancer, he offered himself to go to the stables and interview his little friend, for whom he had a great affection, and whom he had assisted into the world a few years before. Being as active as a cat, the loft presented no difficulties to him; he was, however, gone some time. The vicarage people in consequence quite made up their minds he had got up the ladder and was unable to come down again. For some reason or other this seemed to give them all infinite pleasure; the Vicar even said, "It served him right for being so sure he could negotiate the dangerous thing."

What really had happened was this, having run up the ladder and drawn himself into the loft, he crawled and climbed over the trusses of hay, looking right and left for signs of Dora, until he reached the far end, where in a corner amongst the hay was a frightened little girl with a defiant face.

Dr Howard sat down on the hay by her, saying, "You

have got a cosy little corner here, may I have one of those rosy apples ? " and choosing one that looked tempting, began to eat it, chattering all the time to the child, asking her why she stayed up there, and would she come down and drive home with him and stay a little while, play with his children, and go on his rounds with him ? .

" Oh, I should love that, but father won't let me, I know, and if I come down I will kill myself ; I hate father, and I hate mother worse."

" Tut-tut, young woman, you are old enough to know better than to talk such rubbish ; why let me see, how old are you now ? Nine ? Well you wait here while I go and see what father and mother say." Without waiting for any reply Dr. Howard climbed over the trusses of hay and disappeared.

He had some difficulty in persuading these fond parents to let him have the little girl for a time, " not at any rate until we have punished her." With great self-restraint the doctor, who loved children, argued and pleaded for Dora, but it was not until he impressed upon them that the child was in such a highly strung nervous state there was no saying what she might do unless very tenderly treated and given a change of scene that a reluctant permission was given.

The doctor was not long in making his arrangements : he would take Dora back with him, and Mrs. Dennis could send what was necessary in the way of clothes after her ; he really felt rather uneasy about the child, he had seen something of this kind would happen before long, for neither Mr. Dennis nor his wife understood children in the smallest degree, and Dora was an intelligent child, a mass of nerves and feeling, but had been thrown back upon herself so often that at the age of nine she was an unhappy, resentful and revengeful bundle of nerves.

Little did any of them think as the motor swept out of the drive carrying Dora away how and when she would return. Dr. Howard was very wise in his treatment, giving Dora occupation that interested her, and taking her on his

rounds with him, long drives in the open air, until at last he observed the twitching of her mouth cease. He hoped in time to see the hard, resentful look die out of her eyes, but it never did.

After Dora had been a few months with the Howards the doctor bought a good practice in London, and as the child refused to go home he took her with him. As time went on she proved a great help to him, keeping his visiting-book, looking after his accounts, and showing great interest in his work, besides being a great help to his wife in the house, helping everybody in fact, but in a cold, unsympathetic way preventing anybody but the doctor, who understood her so well, from becoming attached to her.

But even he was a little startled at the bitterness of her heart when one morning a black-edged envelope arrived by post for him, leaving hardly room for the address, the contents of which were to the effect that Mr. Dennis had lost his loving wife, followed by many texts illustrating how prostrate he was with grief while bearing up, as was the duty of a God-fearing man.

When Dora came into the study with his list of visits he was to pay to his patients during the day, the doctor drew her towards him and told her gently the news of the mother's death, asking if she would like to go home to her father. The only reply he got was " No, thank you," while she drew away with tightened lips and hands folded very tight, then continued to put all his things into his bag for him as usual —stethoscope, notebook, thermometer, thermos flask filled with hot coffee, and all the necessaries of his work, nothing forgotten, just as usual.

Asking her if she would be coming with him on his round, she replied, " No, I want to work." Dr. Howard said, " Which is it to-day, dear ? "

" French and German, father ; I cannot get on and read the books I wish to study until I can read them more easily." She always addressed Dr. Howard as " father."

Dora had now quite made up her mind she meant to be a nurse, if she could pass the exams., and Dr. Howard spent

all his spare time teaching her, and finding her so apt a pupil, he used at times to discuss difficult cases with her.

The time arrived when Dr. Howard thought it wise for Dora to train as a nurse in a hospital, and naturally chose the one where he was consulting physician, keeping a close watch on her and her work. Asking the house-surgeons how she was getting on, all said she worked well, was very industrious, quick and clean, but nobody got to know her very well, as she made friends with nobody, seldom speaking except about her work.

Dora worked for three years in the hospital, and won golden opinions from the doctors for her steady nerve, power of endurance and zeal, though they all laughingly said they would not like to be nursed by her, she was so hard and unsympathetic; even Dr. Howard once or twice spoke to her, asking her to try and put herself in the place of the poor patients passing through the horrible, dreadful time awaiting an operation, lonely, frightened and miserable, when a few encouraging words of sympathy and hope, a little story of how she had known similar cases, which had done so well, or the doctor was so clever and any such morsels, crumbs of comfort, but it seemed impossible to her, she carried out all the technical duties with the utmost care and precision, but nothing more. It used to grieve the good doctor, and he one day told her so; he thought he saw a misty look come into her eyes, but she said nothing.

When letters and telegrams came to the hospital for an extra clever nurse for a difficult private case Nurse Dennis was sent when possible.

There had been a very busy time in the hospital, and Dora had not seen her dear doctor for some days, when she was sent for to the matron's or sister's room, and told to get ready to catch the next train down to Loughboro' to nurse a clergyman who was very ill.

The next train carried Dora back to Loughboro', where at the station John, now growing old, was sitting awaiting the arrival of the train, perched up on the box of the old lumbering Victoria, looking quite prehistoric. The light

did not seem very good as she tried to find the step, and she groped for something to catch hold of to pull herself up by ; somehow she did not feel quite well. Without knowing quite how it all happened, she found herself out on the old familiar road, turning in at the old white gate and rumbling up to the vicarage she had left so many years before. Arrived at the door, she got out and asked John how the gentleman was, how long he had been ill, and all she wanted to know, and as she looked at him, remembering how he used to hide and shield her when in trouble years before, and that he did not even now know her—she was back in her old home and not a word of welcome, not even from Gip, the old fox-terrier !—an unreasonable sickness came over her, a feeling of self-pity, anger, misery ; all her life she knew and felt she was unloved, and every moment of her life resented it, but not until now, standing on the doorstep ringing a bell which nobody answered, John beside her without a word or look of recognition, did she feel such utter desolation, almost depriving her of speech. A wobble would come in her voice as she asked if a doctor was in attendance.

Nobody having answered the bell, John said he would go round the back way and open the door from inside ; the cook must be busy with the master upstairs.

Left alone, Dora crept up to Moses to pat him, but the old horse did not recognise her either, and even when he felt a head laid against his soft old muzzle and warm raindrops trickle down over it, he hung his old head with lustreless, tired eyes, making no sign.

Oh, Moses ! If only you could have poked your nose into her hand, or whinnied, what a salvation you would have been !

The rattling of opening the front door brought Dora back to outward calm and attention to her work.

Entering with firm step and cold voice, she asked to be shown to her room, wondering which one it would be. Would it be the old nursery ? No ! She passed that door, and was shown into the dressing-room belonging to the

state bedroom, through the open door of which she saw Mr. Dennis propped up in bed, a shadow of his former self.

Having changed into her uniform of grey cotton dress, big cap and apron, she entered the invalid's room ; he was alone, and evidently very ill, looking most uncomfortable, his pillow slipping over the edge of the bed, clothes slipping off on to the floor, windows all shut, hot and stuffy room, dirty cups and saucers everywhere, some half full of milk, glasses half full of brandy—general chaos and confusion.

She was too well trained a nurse to begin fussing, but sat quietly down near the bed, well in sight, and taking care not to let her chair touch the bed and shake it. She listened patiently to his grumbles, mixed up with texts and an account of the righteousness of his life, until he fell asleep.

How thankful she felt, while sitting in motionless silence for fear of disturbing her patient, that she had not been obliged to nurse her father in one of the old rooms so full of association ! How strangely small the place looked, so different from what she had always thought it ; everything looked so uncared for and shabby. Why did she feel so upset and miserable ? Could it be she had been fond of the place and her people, after all ? No ! Oh no ! A thousand times no ! On her way to her room, she had passed the deep seat in the bay window over the porch, where she had sat so many times in disgrace, with lessons to learn that were far beyond her years. She remembered as if it were only yesterday how cold she had been, and how hungry, when she heard her father and mother go into the dining-room for their midday dinner, leaving her without anything to eat until her lessons were learnt, which were Dutch to her, she did not understand them, and though her father was a scholar himself, he had no idea of how to impart his knowledge.

Why had fate sent her back here ? Some other nurse would have done just as well. She was a fool to come, but she had no idea she would feel like this, all upside-down and wretched. If only John had recognised her, and said he was glad to see her, or old cookie ; even if Moses had

remembered her it would not be so hard, and Gip was nowhere to be seen, and she could not ask where he was.

For a moment or two she slipped back into her chair, her hands lying inert in her lap and a softer look in her face; she was thinking how hard she would try to understand children, and how gentle and kind she would be to them, knowing from her own experience how injustice, want of gentleness and sympathy turned little ones into cannibals of their own hearts.

Had it really made her as hard as people said she was? How could she be, when she longed to be loved, to be necessary to someone's happiness! How she had hoped for years her father or mother would write an affectionate letter saying they missed her, and would like to have her back, instead of the letters she received, saying they supposed they must have the ungrateful girl back, it was not fair on the doctor to expect him to keep her for ever, though they paid him handsomely all the time.

She really loved Dr. Howard, and now always thought of him and spoke to him as "father," anticipating his every need and wish in return for his kind shelter. How she loved to hear him say, first thing on entering the house, "Where is Dora?" Did he know how she longed and listened for his voice?

She wondered, did grown-up people ever understand children? Did they know what their griefs were to them, how intense their sorrows and their joys, filling their hearts and minds, living so entirely in the present, without the religion and world-learnt philosophy that grown-up people have to comfort them? Grown-up people may think and know that in an hour or so their children's griefs may be forgotten, but *they* do not know it, and it is the treatment children receive in their unhappy moments that marks up on life's fingerpost by which road they will travel.

The entrance of the doctor interrupted her reverie; she arose quietly and followed him into the dressing-room, received her orders, and was told, "The old man cannot last very long, and must not be allowed to worry about anything."

Returning to the sick room she found her patient awake, and she made him more comfortable and the room tidy. For a few days he seemed better, and chatted to her of an ungrateful daughter he had, working in a London hospital, who did not care whether he lived or died, but she would care presently when he was gone, for he had left all his money to be divided amongst the foreign missions, and she would be sorry then, and the nurse would find his will in the right-hand drawer of his writing-desk in his study, and the keys were on the dressing-table. But he did not want to die, and did not see any reason why he should; he was not so old as all that, but he was miserable and lonely, and frightened, though he didn't know why he should be, for he had always been a God-fearing man, doing his duty in that state of life unto which it had pleased God to call him. Then in a voice almost a whisper, looking round to see if anybody would hear, " Nurse, do you think it will be all right with me ? I feel so frightened."

Pretending not to understand him, she said, " You cannot expect to get all right again if you talk so much ; you will tire yourself out." This, instead of making matters better only made them worse, and he told her she was a cruel, hard woman, and began to cry, which brought on such a bad heart attack that Dora sent off for the doctor, wishing someone to share her responsibility.

On arrival, he said he must have a prescription made up with all haste, so seizing a letter out of her pocket, handed it to the doctor. On the back of it he wrote the prescription, and it was sent off in haste. The doctor waited until it came, and gave the sick man a dose, injected strychnine, waited to see him better and conscious, then left, putting the medicine and prescription on the table beside the bed.

Having been up for several nights, it was arranged that the nurse was to lie down and sleep on the bed in her own room, and cook would sit with him, and call her if he wanted anything.

Next morning there was a marked change in him ; the attack of the night before had shaken him badly, but he

wished to be propped up against his pillows and read some of his letters, while his nurse was busy putting the room tidy. Something, she never knew what, made her turn round suddenly and look at her patient; he was blue and shaking, his eyes looking excited, in his hand the prescription taken up by mistake amongst his letters. The side facing him had "Miss Dora Dennis" on it; the old man was looking over the top of the paper at his nurse, then back again at the paper.

Presently, in a voice she did not seem to know, he said, "Are you my Dora? I thought I seemed to have heard your—voice—before."

Quickly she gave him his heart drops, prescribed for fainting fits, thereby saving another bad attack. Placing both hands in her own, looking up into her face, he said, "I am so—so—glad. You are my Dora, aren't you?"

Nurse replied, "Never mind who I am; you must not talk."

He was quiet for a little while, but never taking his eyes off her as she moved about the room. Presently, signing to her to come to him, he said, "Aren't you sorry for me, Dora? I think I am dying, and I am frightened"—a little gulping sob, and then—"Yes, I am so frightened; can't you say anything to make me feel better? Do you think it will be all right with me?" Then, angrily, "What a hard, cold woman you are! You are not fit to be a nurse; you have mistaken your calling—you should be a matron in a prison."

This was all blurted out spasmodically, between gasps for breath.

Dora waited till he had done, and was too tired to say anything more, then replied, "No, I do not pity you; I pity nobody but children and dumb animals. I like to see people suffer; I like to see them lonely and miserable as I am, and unloved as I have been. You have always told me you were a God-fearing man. I would be the last to rob you of it now."

She realised it was no use saying anything more, for her

father did not hear ; he had reached the end of his journey, and without the blessing of even the certainty that he had found the light of which he had so often preached.

How did Dora Dennis feel as she stood beside the pathetic figure of her father, who had held out despairing hands for help when drowning, while she, instead of helping to save, had pushed his poor, frightened head further under water ?

There comes a day to us all when the religion Fate has been preparing for us takes possession of our hearts. It had come to Dora, for, while it was unbearable to her, and no longer possible to see one of our little travelling companions shut up in a cage—a little bird, all big heart and feathers, with an earnest purpose in its life, beating its little wings against a cage bars, beating its little head against the roof, while it sings—sings of what ? Maybe its broken heart ; maybe its faith that all will sometime come right ; maybe of its unfulfilled desires ;—when to her it was impossible to bear seeing the joy and life taken from any little living thing at our mercy—yet to see a human being in agony, in want of help and in misery, left her cold. Indeed, it seemed at times to be a comfort to her, as if her own misery were in a way avenged.

The miserable necessity of sorting out the papers and belongings of those who have left us was hurried through with all possible speed. The family lawyer asked if she knew if there was a will and, if so, where it would be found. She replied everything should be ready for him when the funeral was over. She did not attend it. Why should a man's nurse attend his funeral ?

As soon as the house was empty, all having gone from motives best known to themselves to see the last of the vicar, Dora fetched out the will. It was in a long envelope not even fastened down. How easy it would be to put it in the fire, when, being the last of the family, all would be hers, hers to give to dear Dr. Howard and his wife, who had been her best friends ! She held it in her hand, turned her head, and looked at the fire. The doctor wanted it more than the missionaries. No, he didn't, he had plenty ; and

she wanted nothing more than she had got and could earn, but how she would like to make some return to her kind friend. Then she closed her eyes, still holding the envelope in her hand, and pictured to herself the doctor's face if he knew she even contemplated such a thing ; and with a start she pushed the chair back and stood the will on the chimney-piece by the clock, which said it had been presented to the Rev. Edward Dennis on his marriage by the parishioners of Loughboro'.

The funeral party returned, the will was read, but having been drawn up by himself was not legally worded, and even if it had been, all mention of household effects, goods and chattels had been overlooked ; only the capital was mentioned, so after all these were hers to do as she liked with. The family lawyer being made acquainted with the fact that the reason Mr. Dennis's daughter was unable to come from Town to the funeral was because she was already there and in person at the moment, came to the conclusion she must be a little mad, and when she informed him she still wished the missionaries to have it exactly as her father had directed, and that everything not mentioned in the will was to be divided equally between the two servants, who had been twenty years in his service, he no longer thought her mad, but was quite sure of it.

The first possible moment she hurried away. Now that John and cook were aware who she was and how good to them, Dora came to the conclusion their affection was more embarrassing than their not recognising her, added to which she was receiving worrying accounts of Dr. Howard. He had been laid up for some time with blood poisoning, and she was most anxious to be with him if the hospital could spare her.

So once more Moses shuffled over the roads to Loughboro' station, though he was now the property of faithful John, and Dora turned her back for ever on her old home. Arrived in Town she at once reported herself to the matron at the hospital, and asked for leave to go to Dr. Howard in Harley Street, which was granted.

He had been anxious she should not know how ill he was while she was nursing her father, so when she saw her dearest friend, to whom, though she had not till now known it, she was passionately attached, her heart stood still within her. What would life be to her without him? she cared for nobody's praise but his; nobody really loved her but him. There was no time for raving, every moment was taken up in attending to him; the day nurse was allowed to return to the hospital while Dora took her place.

Dr. Howard sank very rapidly, but several times before he died he smiled at Dora and said, "How could I ever have thought you hard and cold; you are perfect."

It was the express wish of the doctor that he should be cremated, which was for some reason an agony to Dora. She could not bear to think of it, and declined to attend the service, and as soon as they were all gone she put on her bonnet and cloak and went out into the fog of November 11, 1910.

November 12th awoke to find London still hidden in dense fog. At two o'clock the sun struggled through for a while, and the nurses in Park Lane took their charges into the Park to feed the ducks. Seeing a great crowd by the boat-house on the Serpentine they asked a park keeper what it was all about; was it suffragettes? "No," replied the park keeper, "it's the body of a handsome young hospital nurse we found drowned; she comes from —— Hospital, we think, she wears their uniform. The police is there seeing to it all."

"Do you think, Mr. Park-keeper, that she fell into the water during the fog? Lost her way?"

A whimsical smile played about the keeper's mouth as he answered, "Perhaps."

CHAPTER XII

Some snobs—Blue-blooded ones—Otherwise—A commercial papa scores—Are we all mad?—Might-have-been days—Some pet economies—A noble lord's "shoot"—A host speaks his mind—Di Barringtown's love—Her indiscretions—A little lecture—An annoyed wife—A snub from Ascot—More home truths—A miserable explanation—A curious divorce—The butler gives notice—A sanctimonious prig—A heartless mother—Mr. Justice Butt looks bored—Eloquent Counsel—Defendant falls out with the judge—Counsel insulted—The judge makes a suggestion—Both parties agree—Off to Paris.

I AM not going to look at any more of the negatives in my dark room, for they depress me, so instead I will write of some of the people I have met who have amused me, snobs for instance, many of them have been interesting, a few surprising, a few charming in their acknowledged snobbishness.

There are many varieties, snobs male and female, not forgetting the child snob, of which there is a plethora. I think I had better class them snob, snobber, snobbest, and then the children, shall we call them snobbums? The dictionary really does not provide us with a sufficiently varied and comprehensive vocabulary. For instance, if we cannot see we say we are blind, that is all right; if we cannot hear we say we are deaf; but what word is there to describe the situation when we cannot smell? When I compile a dictionary I shall call it "snumb," it rhymes nicely with "dumb."

I do not wish to hurt the feelings of my snobs, for I have liked some of them very much, and they have amused me often. It is a great mistake to think they are all among the *nouveau riche*, for I have known some fairly profound blue-blooded ones.

How shall we describe a snob? It is often easier to say what a thing is not than describe what it is. The dictionary again fails us, only saying a snob is a "vulgar person," and wisely leaves it at that before becoming involved. Some snobs I have met could hardly have been called vulgar. I have noticed that usually when a man realises he is a snob he ceases to be one, which sounds rather Irish.

With women it is different. If a female is a snob nothing will cure her, for she will never allow she is one, on the contrary would describe herself as being very select and chaste in her tastes. But you can always tell them a mile away; they have a peculiar smile at one side only of their mouths, have cold, inquisitive eyes, and as soon as they get near enough, ask inquisitive, impertinent questions.

Broadly speaking, I suppose one would describe a snob as a person who is desperately afraid someone may fail to notice what a fine fellow he or she is, what high-born folk; and yet this is not a satisfactory definition, does not accurately describe what constitutes a snob.

But then there are so many varieties of the species. We are all human documents with our parts to play on the stage of the world in that great drama we call "Life," and we cannot hope to be successful among the crowd of actors if we do not dress for our parts as the rest do. Herein lies the whole essence, the whole root of snobbery. It is in the dressing for our parts we find the index to our characters.

From this point, thought carries us to how we come by our characters. We are then confronted by a process over which we have no control, but to which we must give articulate expression, then remembering man is the victim of the forces he carries about with him, presented to him by that great conveyancing deed birth, and that the antinomies of our being lie far deeper than our little life, it behoves us to look broadly at life's problems and be infinitely gentle with its victims. We are so apt to judge other folk by the light of our own souls, which does not always spell justice for the other people.

I am inclined to think we are all snobs at heart, only

education teaches us how to drape it decently. Where can we find greater snobs than amongst ordinary, everyday schoolboys and schoolgirls ? I have often been struck with their extreme vulgarity, which goes to show it is more or less natural to us.

Staying in Shropshire one Christmas with friends, each of the boys had been allowed to bring home a friend from school, and as usual in the holidays we all did our best to amuse the youngsters. Several of us grown-ups agreed to go with the boys and have a " pot at the rabbits," as they called it. My little friend of the house I was staying in was called John, his school friend's name was Vandeleur, if I remember correctly. John was trying all the time to give the best place where the rabbits were likely to bolt to his friend. I listened for a while to their conversation, though they did not know I was listening.

Vandeleur. " How much money have you got, John ? "

John. " About 10s. at present, I am broke with Christmas presents."

Vandeleur. " Poor chap, what a shame ! My father gives me just what I want, but of course he is a very rich man. He never shoots with anybody unless it is the King. Obliged to be a bit careful, you know, when you mix with that set. I never move about without a fiver in my pocket, never know when you may want it."

John. " Oh, my father's awfully poor ! I should not like to take it from him. In fact he is so poor he says I shall have to earn my own living ; he can't afford to give me more than a good education."

Vandeleur (with scorn in his voice). " I thought your father was a lord ! "

John. " So he is. What's that got to do with it ? "

While this conversation had been taking place John's sister came striding up, a very mannish young woman with a heart of gold, aged fifteen summers. She at once chimed in and expressed her opinion, namely, it was a pity Vandeleur's father did not pay the extra twopence to have his son taught manners.

During my visit I heard a good deal more of the same sort of thing. The school friend was a veritable little snob.

Another brilliant specimen, who crossed my path awhile ago, bought a house in a fairly good provincial hunting country, arrived there with a great splash of horses, red and brass sort of fire-engine motor-cars, went to hunt balls in the coat and buttons of a dead-and-gone hunt, squeezed in his waist, and minced about with a very lardy-dardy way of speaking. He began instructing the local masters of hounds on the way to avoid kennel lameness, which he said was due to the hard dryness of the roads in summer when at exercise!

This man's wife was a very ladylike woman. I used to look at her and try to put myself in her place when he was boasting of all he could do, what he allowed in his house and what he did not, what he advised the masters of hounds to do, and telling people what he did not know about cars was not worth knowing. It was such a temptation to draw him on to make a further donkey of himself, but before long something went wrong with finances and they moved on.

There is hope for the rich snob who has acquired wealth, he generally improves, for he meets and rubs shoulders with people who have had handed down to them from generations of polished ancestors a certain calm, a refinement of manner and expression, from whom if he is fairly quick and intelligent (which he will be probably if he has made his money or even been able to keep what has been made for him) he will copy, becoming less aggressive and a more respectable member of society.

This class of person is, however, very trying. When I have been told how he has bought that poor chap Lord Scattercash's little place of 15,000 acres, which he is improving enormously, laying down electric light plant in the park to make the deer more cheerful, and all sorts of beautiful terra-cotta figures, and that when all is finished he means to ask the poor chap down to see if he can guess what it has all cost to put his property into order and improve it,

words fail me; I can only look in wonderment, but after all I am inclined to think this snob is a person to be envied, all his geese are swans, his gold suffices him, it buys all he wants, and he is probably very happy and satisfied trying to impress on his neighbours what they are most anxious to forget about him.

Another kind I have met, less fortunately endowed with worldly goods, that seldom outgrows his malady, for circumstances oblige him to dwell amongst those who fall flat on their faces before him. This of course feeds him, and he will never be anything but snob, snobber, snobbish to the end of his days.

I have observed still another subtle form of snobbery, that of pretending to be pals and on equal terms with people in an entirely different station of life to their own, preferring to consort with stable-boys and others of that ilk. With their lips they say, "We are all one flesh and blood, and I have no nonsense about me"; in their hearts they know and feel quite differently. That is only their way of apologising for their curious friends and acquaintances, whom of course they only like because of their "superior brains and intellect," which curious phrase being interpreted means they like being with people who will toady them, though of course this is not done with the vulgarity born of deficient brains, but gently, often with consummate skill for reasons of their own; while in the hearts of these toadies there really dwells envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness.

One curious form of snobbery I met once on board ship going out to India. A tall and very beautiful youth was going out to join a regiment which considered itself most select, and indeed many of them were very charming. This youth's money came from hops when they had been manipulated, that I think is a tender way of putting it, but so sensitive was he about the source of his income that if anybody at the dinner-table ventured to say he would drink beer it was considered a personal insult and done on purpose to annoy.

Another, a very nice old self-made man I knew years ago, put his son into a crack cavalry regiment, where he received very rough handling and a signed roundrobin requesting him to remove himself to some other regiment where his society would be more appreciated. The father was naturally rather annoyed and wrote to the colonel expostulating, receiving a reply stating his regiment was noted for the gentlemen and nobility in it; even in the ranks there were plenty, drawing the somewhat obvious reply from the commercial papa that it was a pity he had not a few more gentlemen amongst the officers! I think the father scored.

It is possible and doubtless very excellent to be in the world and not of it. Anyone having no ties, or willing to cast them from him, may retire into the country and live in the clouds, "far from the madding crowd," and he may draw very near to the "peace that passeth all understanding," but if he elects, or circumstances oblige him, to live in the midst of many, he had better choose his companions from his own class of life, the one in which he has been brought up, where every word he speaks will not be construed into contempt or holding some double meaning.

I am a firm believer in class keeping to class, it is the only true comradeship. As in politics, there is nothing that drives a man so surely to revolt as unrealised expectations, so in social life anything that can be construed into contempt is never forgiven, even bodily injury would be more easily pardoned. Classes that have from earliest youth been brought up to look upon one another with suspicion will not, cannot amalgamate with success. In theory it may be very telling, but in practice wellnigh impossible.

Both parties look at things in general and things in particular from diametrically opposite points of view, the one class is morbidly on the alert for slights, while the other is naturally more or less on the defensive, though I allow a man's own good breeding is his best security against other people's bad manners. Want of reason may be offensive, but want of faith in one hurts.

Vanity is one of the causes of snobbery in men and in women. Indeed I am under the impression it has ruined more women than love has ever done.

But to return to our snobs. To be a success in any form of life it is necessary to be a snob judiciously clothed. I am also inclined to think unless a man or a woman is a bit of a rascal they will be hopelessly left behind, by this I do not blame them for being rascals, remembering Schopenhauer's very true definition that life is divided into two divisions, " one half busily employed in selling spurious goods and the other half earnestly engaged in paying for the goods in false coin ! "

It is not always easy at first sight to diagnose a snob, but there are two occasions when they may be trusted to give themselves away without fail, namely when making love and when they have dined " not wisely but too well."

Snobs are nauseating in their amorous moments, being quite unable to discern what should be left unsaid, what should be seen and what appear not to be seen. A male snob is fond of talking about his loves and experiences, which to a well-bred man would be inconceivable.

The other moment to which I refer is when after a good dinner the flood-gates of conversation are let loose. The snob will then emphasise his own particular line, maybe by boasting, by disclosing with many winks and expressions of clever cunning the underhand and most unpicturesque part he has played in his part of the stage.

The heart of a snob entirely misses that dignity so essential in our pleasures as well as in our business affairs.

He has not the calculation and profound sense of proportion necessary to prevent tripping himself up over his ideas and emotions. After all, everyone of us who thinks finds himself in a dilemma between intellect and emotion.

I came across some lines the other day that amused me and seemed to fit the moment :

" You always speak ill of me,
I always speak well of thee,
But spite of all our noise and pother
The world believes not me nor t'other."

I have wondered sometimes if we are not all a little mad. Certainly when we are in love we are all very mad; and outside that I think we are most of us a little mad on some particular point.

I have been looking back at some of my "might-have-been" days and feel that I have much to be thankful for in what I have escaped. Not very long ago I was asked to luncheon with one of my earliest loves who has since those "might-have-been" days taken unto his bosom a wife. He was very canny with his pennies as a boy, and now as a man is even cannier, though he is very rich. When luncheon was announced I thought the table looked very bare; there was a quantity of well-kept silver, but all I could see to eat was a very plain cake, some pieces of bread and some diminutive pats of butter. Presently a beautiful silver dish was handed round with exactly three cutlets in it, that was one for each of us. I was told if anybody wanted more they were in the fender ready prepared by the gas-stove, and could be cooked in a few minutes, but on principle they did not have more cooked unless they knew that they were wanted as it was so wasteful. I looked into the fender and sure enough there reposed some prepared but uncooked cutlets on a beautifully clean grid.

By the time I had eaten my cutlet and a piece of cake I had had enough, but the arrangement struck me as strange. After luncheon my host told me it was one of his busy days, as he had to wind up all the clocks in the house and see that the children's clothes were properly aired on coming home from the wash. He never trusted anybody else to do these things. I looked at the might-have-been's wife to see how she viewed these economies and peculiarities; she appeared to be calm and happy.

Then there is a certain noble lord who owns much property in the neighbourhood of the New Forest; he gives large shooting parties, and his shoots are excellent and well arranged. The luncheons are not sumptuous certainly, but that is all the better, for nobody shoots well after a big repast. The uncommon features of these parties lies in the

fact that the host almost invariably comes out having forgotten his ammunition or brought an insufficient quantity, obliging him to borrow from his guests all day.

This got on the nerves of one of his frequently invited neighbours, so next time he went to shoot he turned up without cartridges ; he had unfortunately forgotten them ! and had to keep apologising all day to his host for having to borrow from his keepers. The beauty of the whole thing is, every feather goes straight away to the market.

I have been trying to think whether I prefer people saying unpleasant things to my face or behind my back, and have decided on the latter. There is always a chance that we may never hear what is being said behind our backs, and we feel it really matters very little, but it is altogether different if unpleasant things are said to our faces : it is difficult on the spur of the moment to frame suitable replies that will be ladylike, and at the same time telling.

For instance, what would be a suitable reply in the following case which really happened to my knowledge ?

There lived near us at one time a very hospitable and kind-hearted couple who entertained a good deal in a quiet way. The husband prided himself on always speaking his mind and being straightforward. Some people he did not know particularly well invited themselves to stay when passing through the country, and not being sensitive folk they did not discover they were outstaying their welcome. At last one morning they announced they *really must* go. When taking their departure they thanked their host for a very pleasant visit which they had much enjoyed, receiving in reply, " So you ought, you have had the best of everything. Good-bye."

Being a very happy woman, though I have had my share of sorrow like the rest of the world, I am always wishing to see everybody else happy and trying to encompass it. Addison says, " How grand it is to ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm." It may be very grand directing the storm, but it does not always spell success. I remember once my endeavours in this direction being peculiarly unsuccess-

ful and my feeling small and disappointed. I think the kind and charitable, especially the religiously charitable people, often do more harm than the mischief-makers, which is not a comforting reflection.

The story I am about to tell is old history now, but many will know to what I refer though I doubt if many, or indeed any, know the truth of the scandal, for of course the woman came off second best, and many untrue versions of the story were scattered abroad.

Di Barringtown was a great friend of mine. That is not exactly her name, but it is near enough. She was a few years younger than myself, and we both hailed from the North. At the time of which I am writing she was a young and very handsome widow of an elderly peer.

I do not think I should have referred to this old story were it not that her love was such a wonderful and beautiful thing, though unfortunately misplaced, and also to prove my theory that those wishing to be kind and helpful often find themselves in uncomfortable and unsatisfactory premises themselves ; but of course that cannot be helped.

Being fond of Di, and thinking she probably did not know that unkind things were being said of her and her relations with a married man, I ventured to approach her on the subject. I knew the man in question, he had been in the Gordon Highlanders or one of the Highland regiments, if I remember rightly. I will call him Captain Cardewe : he was very good-looking and smart with expensive tastes and little money, until he married a woman who had plenty, derived from pins and needles, soap, or some such thing.

This is what Di said to me in return for my little words of warning and advice :

" Yes, he is a married man, but what of that ? I love him ; how can I help it ? Who put it into my heart ? Let me ask you that. It is not a thing that we can help, it just comes, and then all the world is changed.

" At one time no doubt I should have thought it very wrong, now I glory in it—yes, I glory in it ! I look at the sun and I say, ' Dear, beautiful sun, shine on, shine on

everybody for I am so happy.' *He loves me,* and I feel I must touch the sweet and tender flowers as I pass them, and I say, send out your sweet scent far and wide so that everybody may enjoy you, for I am so happy *he loves* me. . . . When I see little children I want to stroke their hair and kiss their necks, for *he loves* me. . . . And this is what you want to take from me! Never, never; and if he was to tire —no, I will not talk of that, he won't, he can't, and he could not do without me. I have made him, and he loves my little finger better than the whole body, soul and painted face of his commonplace wife put together."

Di paused for breath, so I got a word in again edgeways. "But he must have cared for her once or why should he marry her?"

"Nonsense," replied Di, "he never loved her, I tell you, he loved me, but he was so hard up and pressed for money, and I told him—yes, *I* told him to look out for money and marry it, and he did. Why should that prevent my loving him and keeping his love? Don't be so old maidish!"

"But," I protested, "she is very unhappy; she resents your relations with her husband, for she also is very fond of him."

"Well, it is very foolish of her. Poor man, he has done his share, she is now in the society she pined for, she has two fat, commonplace babies, a lovely house and heavenly clothes—what more does she want?"

"She wants her husband's love."

"Does she? Well, she won't get it, for it's mine, and I will keep it till my hair is grey, my eyes are blind and my heart is dead—so there! You mean well, I know; you are a dear old thing to come and be stormed at by me, but it is no use, so now we will talk of something else."

Moving across the drawing-room of her little flat, she sat down at her baby piano and sang some dear little ditty, I do not remember the words, but each verse ended with, "For thou hast made my life so glad," and as she came to those lines there was in her voice and in her eyes, as she looked at something I did not see, a note of rapture. She

had not a very wonderful voice, but it always moved me strangely. I felt I must be very gentle and speak very softly; and it always took me some time to recover my powers of speech when she had been singing, something in her voice sounded as if she was in pain, and it frightened me, it was so intense, so full of feeling, and where would this unrestrained capacity of feeling land her?

The door opened, and the footman asked if her ladyship would be at home to visitors.

"No! I mean yes, but only to Captain Cardewe. I expect him about five."

I remarked that, under those circumstances, I had better be moving as it was already past four o'clock, so I said, "Shall I see you at the Wellington Club to-night? Percy says he has asked you."

"Quite impossible; much as I should like it, Captain Cardewe is dining quietly here with me; I always look up his dates and figures for him, and make him rehearse his speeches here to me, before delivering them in the House."

As I drove home I wondered how it would all end. Mrs. Cardewe had asked me to speak to Di and advise her to leave other people's husbands alone, etc. If there is one task more thankless than another it is interfering in people's love affairs, the third party almost invariably gets cussed all round. I was not greatly drawn to this plain wife either, but felt sorry for her, for she loved her man as well as she knew how, and made frantic and pathetic endeavours to look nice and smart so as to be pleasing in his eyes. And she was very loyal, anxious that I should understand he was a very kind, good husband, and she really had nothing to complain of, but she disliked Lady Barringtown's manner to her husband, and perhaps as I was her great friend I would speak to her on the subject.

After my little lecture I heard nothing from Di for a week and feared she was offended. Then when supping one night in a popular restaurant I overheard some people talking of her in a very uncomplimentary manner and I feared matters were going from bad to worse, and I was

very sorry. Lady Barringtown's life had not been a bed of roses, and she had such a wealth of love and energy pent up in her heart only waiting for the right person to come and unlock the door. Unfortunately Captain Cardewe had the key.

The season was coming to its climax of Ascot in about ten days. Di and I had been asked to stay in the same house down there for the races, and we had both been invited to a dance in Grosvenor Square on the night of which I am thinking. I was wondering if Di would be there.

While sitting with my partner where I could see the arrivals, I saw Di greeting our hostess; how lovely she looked. There was not a soul in the room to compare with her, she carried herself so proudly, her dark hair falling in rebellious little curls on her forehead making her pale skin look like marble and her large brown eyes more wistful. Being popular, she was at once surrounded by men, and more than one hoped to win her.

Everything was what the servants call " going off beautiful," all appeared to be enjoying the dance, the rooms were crammed and hot. Later in the evening my partner and I were searching for a cool spot to sit in, when we came across Di and Captain Cardewe sitting behind a screen amongst palms and roses. We moved on, my partner remarking, " Lady Barringtown is going it a bit strong ! "

I remarked icily that I did not know what he meant. He then informed me that she had been sitting in that corner all the evening with Captain Cardewe and had not to his knowledge danced a single dance, and that Mrs. Cardewe had been looking for her husband.

As we were saying good night to our host and hostess I saw the Cardewes just in front of us getting into their carriage and felt comforted, as everybody would see the husband and wife going home together, and perhaps stop the wagging of tongues. We had to wait for our carriage until the one in front moved on. Mrs. Cardewe was tucked in nicely by her husband, and he told the servant to shut the door. Mrs. Cardewe, looking out of the window, said

to her husband, " Are not you coming too ? " He replied, " Not just yet, I have promised a chap to go and have a smoke in his rooms and arrange about a trial at Brooklands." The carriage moved off ; we then saw Di emerge from somewhere and get into a cab with Captain Cardewe and drive off.

The men standing about laughed and were funny, or thought they were, the women pursed up their mouths and I hastened home.

It was no use my worrying myself if she was bent on social ruin, and I felt angry with her, not because she loved the man—she could not help that, I suppose—but because she was so very indiscreet.

A few days later she called to see me before I had finished my breakfast. She wanted to speak to me privately. This being arranged, she began :

" Do you know those rude people at Ascot have written saying, ' Owing to the workmen not having finished painting the room they had hoped to place at my disposal, it would not be ready in time and they must ask me to postpone my visit ! ' Now, old girl, what does that mean ? Have you been put off ? "

" No," I replied, " but I am not surprised at what you tell me, for I know they were annoyed at the way you behaved at their dance, and they afterwards heard that you went off in a cab with Captain Cardewe while his wife went home alone."

" Well," said Di, " now they have insulted me you won't go, will you ? "

I told her I most certainly should. I had done my best to save her from herself, and she would not listen, and the best thing she could possibly do was to write a polite note to our friend at Ascot and pretend she did not see the snub, and then make a party and go down on Cup day, only on no account with Captain Cardewe, and I would try and arrange that she and Mrs. Cardewe should be seen together in public, which might help to smooth things over.

Then I took the opportunity to tell her what I thought of her conduct, and what I thought of Captain Cardewe,

and asked her if she considered it good form to be seen driving down to Hurlingham on his coach with no other ladies present, and did she think it good form to ride his horses and use his carriages, paid for by Mrs. Cardewe's money ?

Finding her still resentful and declaring she saw no harm in it—all she did was aboveboard—I played my trump card. I went and sat close to her on the sofa and took her hand in mine, which she tried to pull away, but I would not let it go, and said to her, " Di, dear, I am older than you and have seen more of the world and studied character possibly more than you have, and, believe me, Captain Cardewe is not worthy of your love, infatuation or whatever it may be, and I think in your heart you know it." She sat quite still, staring into space and made no reply, so I continued, " I can read you all as if your parts were written for a play. Captain Cardewe married his wife for money, to save his name, and to prevent his having to appear in the bankruptcy court. He cares nothing for her and has not the decency, is not man enough, to hide his indiscretions so that he may not wound the feelings of his loyal and faithful wife. He is fond of you in a selfish way. You have, as you truly stated, made him ; but for you and your influence, and work, he would never have been returned for —— but for your coaching and drilling would never have made a mark in the House ; but for you he would not have been able to float all his companies—your love and brain has done it all. He may think he cares for you, whereas it is only, at present, he cannot do without you. He is intensely selfish and cares for no one but himself ; when his feet are firmly planted a few rungs higher up the ladder, you may fall to the bottom for all he will care."

Di rose from the sofa with some dignity, and said coldly, " You may be right, but I am not feeling very well and will go home." I went as far as the front door with her and saw her off.

Ascot came and went, but Di did not put in an appearance, so on the following Sunday I went to see if she was still in

town. I was told by the servant who answered the door that her ladyship was in town but not well enough to see anybody. I sent up my card, and the maid came down to say would I go to Lady Barringtown's room? I found her in bed with the room darkened and her head tied up in handkerchiefs steeped in eau-de-Cologne because she said her head was "splitting."

I felt nervous; something had happened, she was silent and kept her eyes shut. I asked her when she began to feel so ill, and in a perfectly cold, passionless voice, as if repeating a lesson learnt by heart, she said:

"Directly I got home after my last conversation with you I wrote to Captain Cardewe and asked him to come and speak to me." Here she sipped some iced water standing beside the bed, and then continued, stopping every now and then as if something was in her throat, "He came in the evening and I told him I had got into disgrace through being seen so much with him, and if he really loved me with all his heart and soul, as he said he did, if he really loved me better than anything else on earth, I was ready if he was to go away to the other ends of the earth with him, and we would be happy in our own way and care nothing for what the world said."

There was a pause. I did not speak, and presently she began again:

"I cannot—no, I cannot—tell you exactly what he said, but amongst other things" (here with a touch of scorn in her voice), "dearly as he loved me he loved honour more, and had been thinking for some time it would be better to put an end to our 'rapport,' as it was doing neither of us any good."

I put out my hand in sympathy, but she cried angrily:

"No, don't touch me, don't come near me, I want to be alone, but I thought perhaps you ought to know."

I crept downstairs feeling as if my hand had dealt the blow.

I was also once mixed up in a curious divorce case. The Honble. Mrs. F——, no, I had better call her Mrs. Finch,

who was young and very charming, informed me she could not put up with her husband's infidelities and drinking propensities any longer ; she had endured it for three years. As all her people held up their hands in horror and refused to help her she came to me.

I tried to dissuade her from carrying out her idea of getting a divorce, not because I thought her wrong, but because I dreaded for her all the horrors of the proceedings, with its sorded details.

Dolly, for that is the name she was known by amongst her intimate friends, informed me she had quite made up her mind and nothing would shake her resolve.

I told her I doubted her getting a divorce. She said in tones of surprise, " Why not ? Good gracious, I could divorce him a hundred times over ; I used to pretend I did not see things, thinking that the most dignified course to adopt, but lately Albert has taken to coming home at all hours of the day and night and shutting himself up with strange companions in the dining-room. I never can tell which room I can go into with safety.

" Even Briggs [the old butler] came the other day and said, ' Madam, I regret I must hask you to accept my resignation this day month.' When I asked what was troubling him he replied, ' Madam, hif you will 'scuse me I would rather keep my reminiscences to myself, but I will honly say as 'ow all the years I have been a butler in good and 'igh families I 'ave never seen such carryings hon, and being a Christian man I prefer to take my discharge.'

" Both Briggs and I nearly wept ; he has been in our family nearly all his life."

" But, Dolly, has anything fresh happened to make you take this sudden determination ? "

" It is not sudden, I have been trying to make up my mind to do it for some time. Why at this moment there is a horrid, sniffling little man sitting in the front hall refusing to leave until the rent is paid. I am not going to pay anything more, and he may sit there until Doomsday for all I care. Then last night, or rather early this morning,

Albert came to bed with the big silver lamp out of the dining-room in his arms and proceeded to climb into bed while dodging the shade. Oh no! a thousand times no! I will not have any more of it."

I advised her to think well before taking the final plunge, pointing out how that though a man may be entirely in the wrong the blame always falls on the woman's shoulders: it is one of the eternal laws. That it is unfair, but there is no getting away from that fact; live with a man and fight with him all day, or stay under the same roof and live separate lives, and the world smiles upon you, leave him and all the indignities of your daily life and your sun has set.

" But," said Dolly, " how unfair; my husband does not even find fault with me, and I have done no wrong."

" Yes, Dolly, it is monstrously unfair, but, believe me, I have seen more of the world than you have, the moment you leave the shelter of your husband's home, even if you have the privilege of paying for it all, your purgatory has begun. Men consider you fair game, and give you no peace. If you live alone it is called a scandal for so young a woman. If you live with another woman every shred of character you have, or ever had, is torn to shreds. If you choose to live with a man you are looked at askance, though people are more interested and rather jealous of you. So you see there is really nothing left for poor women to do but marry and then make the best of it. I fear I am very disheartening, but could you not before it is too late come to some arrangement with your husband so as to keep up appearances? "

No, she would not listen to me, so I continued, " What do you mean to do with yourself when you have divorced him? You have no children to occupy your time."

" No! thank Heaven, I am spared that misery, of seeing the sins of the fathers visited on the children."

I asked what her people said about it. She replied, " My brother, who, you remember, is a sanctimonious prig with any amount of that selfish cowardice called high moral tone, was delightfully characteristic when I told him of my

determination. He said, 'I am sorry I can do nothing to help you, Dolly, it would be entirely against my principles, you married for better or worse. "Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder."'

"I then asked him if he thought it proper for a man to live with a variety of women and for the proper wife and the would-be wives all to dwell together in one house."

"What did he say to that?"

"That it was a painful subject, and he had a train to catch."

"Have you mentioned the matter to your mother?"

"Yes, rather, she shook her head and said wild horses would not drag her into the witness-box, as it would offend the rest of the family."

I did not know what to advise as I was by no means sure that she was not still fond of the man, so I said, "You were fond of your husband once?"

"Yes, I was, and I am, in a way, still, but I cannot live with him as we are doing at present, it is not right, it is not decent, and if I remonstrate with him he says it is not his fault, he has such an affectionate nature, it is his unfortunate temperament and not of his own choosing. Poor, irresponsible creature."

"But, dear girl, if your people will have nothing to do with you, where are you going to get your witnesses from?"

She replied, "Oh, Nanny, my old nurse, whom I love much more than I do my mother, and then there are the rest of the servants."

I advised her not to depend on them as they were broken reeds to rely upon, and, if unwilling witnesses, such things had been heard of as swearing falsely.

"All I want," cried Dolly, "is for everyone to speak the truth."

"Exactly, but I only wish to warn you so as to prevent you making any mistake, and to prevent you breaking your heart when you find at the last moment everybody has failed you, and in consequence you are unable to sub-

stantiate the charges you have brought against your husband. I am presuming your husband means to defend the action ? "

When the appointed day drew near Dolly asked me to go to the court with her, and I agreed. We had to be at the court at 10.30.

When Dolly came to fetch me she looked as fresh as a rosebud instead of worried and draggled as I expected, and did not appear the least nervous, while I was green with horrors. We entered the building that looks so imposing from outside but is disappointing within. A policeman told us where to go. My friend's jaunty air began to fade a little when she saw her husband standing at the top of the stairs, and it was all I could do to prevent her stopping and talking to him.

We were shown into a dusty dingy little court. Dolly sat by her counsel and I on her other side ; her husband was on the other side of the court with his counsel.

Dolly's side opened the case, stating when she was married, where she had lived, and a perambulation which seemed very unnecessary, but was, I suppose, a sort of introduction of the parties to the judge, who looked frightfully bored and sat back as if not in the least interested or paying the smallest attention to anything that was being said, while really we found afterwards not one little detail had been overlooked. Occasionally he leaned forward and made a note with pencil and paper.

Counsel was waxing most eloquent and drawing harrowing pictures of the life led by the poor wife, when the judge turned over the sheets of paper in front of him containing the facts of the case and, addressing counsel for the other side, said, " There appears to be no charge against the plaintiff, there is no third party cited ; is it necessary to go any farther with the case ? "

Defendant's counsel, whom we had been told was very clever and loved bullying the witnesses, now stood up, his red face growing redder as he replied in an angry tone as if he had been personally insulted :

" No, my lord, there is no co-respondent in this case, but the defendant denies all the charges brought against him, and I must ask you to allow me to cross-examine the plaintiff and her witnesses in the witness-box. The defendant considers his wife is unhinged and nervous owing to the drugs she has taken to procure sleep."

" Oh, certainly, certainly," replied the judge, " it only appeared to me we might be wasting time, but by all means we will continue if——"

Here the judge was interrupted by the defendant standing up with a great clatter and saying :

" It is a shame, judge, I mean sir, I mean my lord, I never said anything of the kind. My solicitor kept saying she was of unsound mind, but it is not true, she is sound enough, and I don't want a divorce, and anyway I won't have her called names by a miserable pip-squeak of a solicitor or any cock-a-doodle counsel," and he gave such a bang on the table by him that he splashed over the ink.

It was most surprising, and happened all in a moment. Major Finch's counsel and solicitor tried to pull him down and suppress him, but both were roughly shaken off, and it would probably have ended in a free fight had not the voice of the judge succeeded in making itself heard, telling Major Finch he was entirely out of order, in fact his conduct was most irregular : that he would have every opportunity given to him to explain anything he liked in proper time, and he considered the defendant had been most unparliamentary and discourteous both to counsel and himself, and some apology was due from him.

Here another bomb-shell exploded, for the defendant's counsel stood up, folding his arms and bowing low to the judge, after shoving his wig angrily on one side, which gave him a very rakish appearance and allowed a stray piece of black hair to appear, and said, " My lord, under the circumstance I retire from the case, and no doubt the defendant will conduct his own case with consummate skill." He then bundled his papers together and prepared to depart.

I turned to look at Dolly to see how she was feeling, and found her, with eyes full of tears, tying her handkerchief into a multitude of knots.

The judge looked from one counsel to the other and suggested that it might be a good thing if plaintiff and defendant with their respective counsels came into his private room and discussed the matter, when he hoped some arrangement might be arrived at. Whereupon he pushed back his chair and with slow and majestic step retired into his room, whither Dolly and her husband with their counsels followed. I waited in the court to see what happened, but before they went into the judge's room Captain Finch and his solicitor nearly came to blows, for the latter asked what he meant by making him look such a fool; if he wished to defend the case some sort of defence must be made. Captain Finch now showed signs of going for the throat of his solicitor, so Dolly put out her hand and in a wobbly voice said, "Will you come with me, Albert, and see the judge in his room?" and off they went hand-in-hand. Dolly tried to drag me with her, but I absolutely declined to move, I thought they had much better fight it out alone, even if the judge had allowed me to go with them.

Three-quarters of an hour I waited, turning over in my mind all sorts of possibilities, when one of the officials in the court came and told me Mrs. Finch was in her carriage and waiting for me. I ventured to ask the stern-looking official if the case was settled. I was longing to know what had happened, but all I got in reply was a sulky, "I have not been informed, Madam." I thanked him much for that, as they did in Alice in Wonderland, and proceeded down the stairs, thinking if they could speak what they could tell of broken hearts, desolation, ruin, with possibly a few exultant people, but not many, I feared.

I arrived at the carriage bewildered and inclined to be angry with somebody, though I did not know why, perhaps because none of the rules of the game as I had understood it had been adhered to.

Dolly seized my hand and pulled me in beside her, saying,

" Don't say a word, don't say a word, and I will tell you all about it."

" The judge is an old dear, and do you know all the time he was pretending to be asleep he was taking in every word, nothing had escaped him. He talked to Albert like a father, something like this :

" ' You are the defendant, sir, in this case, and it is evident from the facts before me that your wife has grave reason for displeasure, and every right for her petition to be granted. You have behaved very badly, and broken your marriage vow. Instead of loving and protecting her you have been unfaithful and placed her in a most invidious position, which no self-respecting woman could tolerate. You have done what the most depraved men hesitate to do, you have fouled your own nest. It is not often my pleasure to try a case in which there is no co-respondent and no charge brought against the plaintiff that can be substantiated. But because of the way, gauche though it be, that you resented any injustice being done to your wife by those whose business it is to make the best defence possible for you, I have come to the conclusion that you must have some affection in your heart for your wife, and perhaps she may see her way to let bygones be bygones and try to live with you once more. I feel the only excuse that can be made for your conduct is that in consequence of drinking more than is good for you, you may not always know what you are doing.'

" ' Yes, that's just it, sir—pardon—my lord—I love her better than anything on earth, and I am always telling her so, but she gets tired of me and cross. I'm a most unfortunate fellow, I can't help my feelings running away with me, and very little upsets me, and—well you know the rest.'

" The judge looked sternly at Albert for a moment or two, then in a calm, cold voice said, ' How would you like to be under care for a time, where you would be unable to get either wine or women ? that suggests itself to me as the best solution.'

" Poor Albert became grey-green with fright and looked at me as if to say, aren't you going to say a word for me? I did not know what to say as he has so often promised me he would be different and always breaks down again.

" I told the judge it gave me no pleasure to live in the house with my husband, and neither did I think it right. He then said considering how loyal and loving my husband was, could I not see my way to giving him another chance to overcome his weakness with my help, and that perhaps I did not know it but it was no uncommon thing for a man on finding his wife was going to divorce him to try by every means in his power to blacken her character and rake up all sorts of stories against her, and only too glad if their solicitors can make out a good defence for them?

" So I thought poor old Albert had behaved rather well, and I agreed I would go to Paris with him to-morrow for a little while, and we are going to try again. Now I cannot talk any more, my head aches and I feel sick ;' I am staying with old Nanny, so I will get out here and you go on home in the carriage. A thousand thanks, you dear old thing."

CHAPTER XIII

Stories from the war zone—Bully-beef tin villages—German food rationing upset—Mr. Lloyd George and a General—Field-Marshal Lord Methuen—His popularity—His interest in the sick—Kindness to the nurses—The King and Queen pay a surprise visit—What happened—An angry but playful doctor—Lord Methuen and the soldiers' canteens—Some scandals—Lord Leverhulme and Sir Richard Burbidge make enquiries—The military authorities upset—General Sir Julian Byng—His new words of command—A dream realised—From charging cavalry to charging tanks—Etonians in the war—A human document—From a dead man's pocket—A Mrs. V.C.—The squire at a concert—A contretemps—Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Mr. Justice Grantham—They write verses—Some fellow-travellers.

I COULD fill a book with the stories that have reached me from the war zone, and are still reaching me for that matter. Some I take with grains of salt, others pass in at one ear and out at the other. A few are pitiful and tragic, others of disgraceful corruption, and wicked waste of taxpayers' money. Stories of gross favouritism, mean and un-English tricks: all mixed up with tales of the glorious heroism of the fighters who got the plum and apple jam not wanted at the base where strawberry and apricot were preferred.

Demobilised men feel they are at liberty now to speak of things honour, policy, and D.O.R.A. forbade a while ago. Some of the many Generals who have been dismissed at a moment's notice and no reason assigned, have stories to tell; some of which the public may hear before long. Those who have nothing more to lose see no reason why they should not tell a few illuminating stories that will require a good deal of explaining; men who are indignant and angry, and have enough for all their wants, and a standing of their own, apart from the army or anything it can do to them

now ; yet of such fine stuff are these Englishmen made that they would go again to-morrow if called upon in an emergency—which may not be so very remote.

A friend quite lately back from Belgium amused me by telling me the people both in France and Belgium were busy reconstructing their villages with the unopened British bully beef tins that were thrown away in thousands, or were used to build up defences, the soldiers having no other use for them.

Another rather neat story which, I believe, originated with Lord Northcliffe. The incident occurred during the later days of hostility. We had printed thousands of forged German food tickets, and our aeroplanes were sent out to drop them wholesale in German towns. Of course they were quickly picked up and used, completely upsetting the enemy's carefully thought-out rationing schemes.

Then, the Generals themselves—the stories of them are legion. Of course no public character can escape criticism, and all have come in for their share. Poor souls, all have done their best, and if sometimes that best has been a mistaken one, and cost us the lives of all that made life lovely to us, we must forgive them as we hope to be forgiven.

When Lloyd George was at the front some little time ago (many of my readers will be able to locate the date) he consulted a very popular and aspirateless General as to his views on a certain suggested policy in regard to our civilian-controlled army. The General was sorry he could have nothing to do with the proposals as he considered they would be disastrous.

This was disconcerting, and Lloyd George spoke strongly. . . . Later in the day he met the General of the morning with whom he had had a difference ; so smiling blandly, the smile that at times I have thought very charming, and at others most aggravating, he invited him to come " for a little walk and a little talk along the briny beach," receiving in reply, " No, thanks, I'm going out with 'Aig."

The stories of the hospitals run by private individuals

or by public subscription are so many, so conflicting, and either so utterly disgraceful, or untrue, that I prefer not to repeat them. It has pained me to hear the way some of the men who have been treated in these hospitals have spoken of the women who have been ministering to their needs. A few of the stories leave one wondering if pure philanthropy has been the guiding motive of their work.

At the same time I feel very disgusted with the men for their ingratitude, and told them so. For, even if there have been irregularities, the hospitals must have been a boon to many, even if they did mistake the ladies' kind attentions, and the doctors and nurses had high words, and gave contradictory orders.

Writing of hospitals reminds me of the many pleasant things I have heard said of Lord Methuen, who has been Governor and Commander-in-Chief at Malta since 1915, and of the kind things he has said to me of the nurses and doctors who have worked in his hospitals out there. He began with 260 beds, 9 nurses and 32 medical officers, and very shortly had 20,000 patients ; since then he has managed 28,000 sick, 350 medical officers and 950 nursing staff, and he says, " I consider the hospitals were admirably organised by the B.R.C.S. and the work of the ladies in them most unselfish and beyond all praise. The nurses and V.A.D.'s won the gratitude of the patients by their kindness and skill in nursing. We had six exceedingly clever consulting surgeons."

Lord Methuen is a very courteous, gentle and unselfish man himself, and in his modest way told me he thought the hospitals in Malta had proved of use. I should think they have. A friend of mine, a young girl who had before the war never seen anything worse than a cut finger. has just come home after devoting the whole of the last four years to nursing in France and Malta, and she is most eloquent in praise of Lord Methuen's untiring devotion to the sick and his thoughtfulness for the nurses, in the little details which often matter so much his influence was felt, and showed

how he interested himself in the comfort and well-being of all. Here is one little instance :

Two sisters came from home ready to give their lives if necessary, and if by so doing they could help or comfort the sick and wounded. They felt very strange and staggered at the magnitude of the task in front of them and not a little home-sick. A thoughtless, and possibly too busy hospital authority, arranged for these sisters to be located at different work in different parts of the town. Lord Methuen ever ready and watchful suggested it would be better, and he wished the sisters not to be separated, at any rate, until more acclimatised to their new surroundings and work. They were overjoyed.

When the nurses wanted rest he and Lady Methuen had them at the Palace and did all that was possible for their happiness and comfort. Used to lend them his box at the opera, also to the soldiers when convalescent. The opera was free on Sundays for both nurses and invalids. Concert parties from England came to cheer, and a number of local people gave their services at concerts and amusements for the benefit of the soldiers, to try and help them to forget the past horrors, and in some cases the miserable future.

I once asked Lord Methuen which of all the big appointments that he has held had he liked best ? He replied, " This one at Malta, I have liked no appointment more. It suited a man of my advanced years." It would no doubt under ordinary circumstances have been restful after his busy life and many campaigns. It so happened that Malta was the half-way house, so to speak, between East and West for soldiers, sailors, transport, and all things appertaining to the war, so that he was kept very busy, and his past experience of men and things helped to make all easier than might have been the case had a less experienced man held the appointment at the time.

The same nurse who told me stories of Lord and Lady Methuen's kindness to them all in the hospitals at Malta, told me the following little story of a hospital in France. She was very busy dressing wounds of soldiers when an order

came she was to prepare at once to evacuate a number of them, and set to work to make all ready and as comfortable as possible for the move. She had to make all haste as many wanted attending to, and their wounds dressed afresh before their ordeal. In the middle of it came a message that the King and Queen were on their way to pay a visit to the hospital and all must be put in apple-pie order for their inspection. Happily for the men, my friend says, the sister in charge was a humane person and said, "Well, it cannot be helped the men must be attended to before anything else, they cannot be allowed to start on a long journey as they are and you must go on dressing them; I am sure the King and Queen will understand." So my friend continued her work without another thought except for the poor shattered and suffering man whose wounds she was dressing: hearing steps behind the screen and being short of some dressing she wanted, without looking up she popped her head round the screen and called the orderly telling him to be quick and bring her the certain thing she wanted, then suddenly looking up found she was addressing the King and Queen, but she returned to her patient at once, knowing well that is what they would wish her to do.

I find some of the soldiers, as well as some of the nurses, amongst themselves speak of the King and Queen as "George and Mary," which sounds disrespectful even for democratic Royalties, but it is, I believe, meant to show affection, at least, I like to think it is.

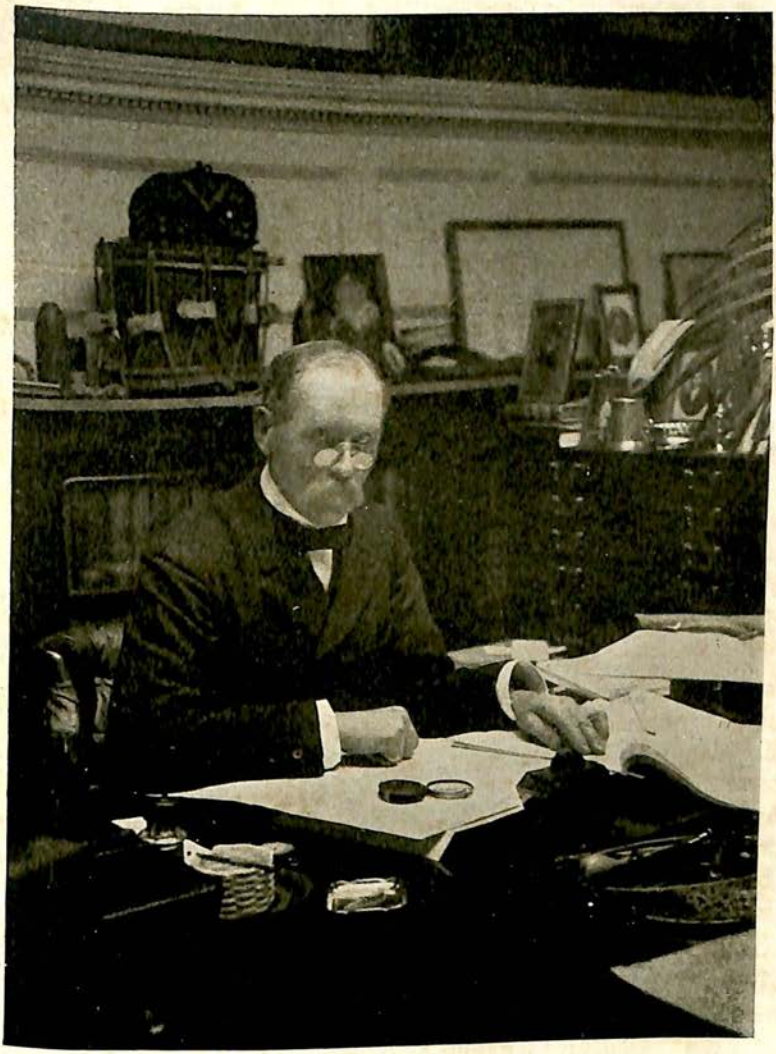
It is a thousand pities that when the King and Queen visit the hospitals they are not allowed to see them in every-day working order, instead of everything being hidden away, the sheet turned down the regulation number of inches and stretched tight over the awful sights beneath, they would surely rather see the sick being attended to instead of having to wait for their food, and general every-day little requirements, a fresh poultice, a drink of water, and all the thousand things invalids are always wanting, than have to wait until their tour of inspection is over.

The King and Queen are full of sympathy for the wounded and visit the hospitals to please the patients and as an expression of their appreciation of their gallant services as well as to encourage those nursing them, yet red tape spoils it all. In the particular case of which I have been writing as soon as the Royalties had gone, big-wigs of sorts, and medical authorities came down on the humane sister and reprimanded her for not having her hospital all standing to attention and the work at a standstill when the Royalties paid their visit. Having delivered this harangue, the chief medical officer present passed out of the hospital, not forgetting to chuck a pretty little V.A.D. under the chin *en route*, and informing her of what she already knew, namely that she was a nice, pretty little thing.

After all the stories I have heard of the hospitals it is restful and pleasant to think of those where the nurses and doctors worked amongst the sick, the dying and the dead, remembering, "the Place whereon thou standest is Holy Ground."

Lord Methuen has at all times worked hard for the better working of the soldiers' canteens which have been such scandals. In South Africa when he commanded Methuen's Horse in 1884–5, when Deputy Adjutant-General in 1888, when General Officer Commanding-in-Chief 1907–9. As Governor of Natal in 1909, he did his utmost to alter the very faulty existing methods of management and to get them on a sound working basis, so as to be a blessing and a boon to the Tommies.

Originally these institutions were intended for the benefit of the troops and not for profiteers, the idea being that the men would, and should, be able to get what they want at little over cost price, and without having to go far afield to look for their requirements. The small profit made being to go to the future good of the canteens themselves. There has been too much private enterprise in canteen management, and bitter are the complaints that have been poured into my ears. I have even heard vows of vengeance. The men are so helpless, especially in war time, when every other place



FIELD-MARSHAL LORD METHUEN

where they can buy anything is placed out of bounds. Even in this European war the scandals have been "loud and long" as one man expressed it to me.

Quartermasters and sergeants have been known to feather their nests at the soldiers' expense, and out of their miserable pay.

Lord Leverhulme, at that time Sir William Lever, and the late Sir Richard Burbidge amongst others, were asked to enquire into the latest scandals; it was hoped that business men might be able to locate the trouble and place the canteens on proper footings. Then followed more trouble, as military folk not usually endowed with great business capabilities resented any poking and prying into what they considered their business, and business methods of getting to the bottom of everything were objectionable; so it was decided to tell these good business men that while appreciating their efforts and acumen it was not desirable to further requisition their services as they were too busy to be expected to give their time to the matter to the extent required. The public formed their own conclusions, not entirely complimentary to the military authorities in question. Though the very nature of the enquiry was such as to make the employment of business men open to objections, of a nature quite easy to grasp.

Lord Methuen has been popular wherever his appointments have led him, and has never suffered from a swelled head, which is refreshing; he does not seem to regard every one he meets as an offensive subordinate who should fall flat on his face when his superior frowns.

He was at Sandhurst with my brother, General Bewicke-Copley; they used to play cricket together and such-like games. My brother was also with him in the Tirah campaign as his Assistant Adjutant-General.

I think the next most popular General of my acquaintance, though of a different era, is Sir Julian Byng, he is as straight as Sir William Robertson, and as plain spoken, nobody need have any fear of his saying anything behind their backs that he will not say to their faces; he is what we used

to call a gentleman, in the days when that word had any significance.

It fell to his lot to give the enemy the most painful surprise of the war; when in November, 1918, his well-kept secret was unfolded. Most of us remember that time; his anxiety must have been great, fearing some breath of his scheme might reach the German lines. But we know now it did not, and when in the darkness his Tanks crept up and he told his men that he depended on every man doing his "damnedest," they understood his new words of command and liked them. All did their damnedest and they crunched over wire entanglements, over trenches, over all that came in their way. It was a great day which no one present will quickly forget.

General Byng's orders and remarks are usually pithy and to the point: he was the man who was asked by Lord Kitchener his views on the Dardanelles problem. He replied briefly, "We must get on or get out." Most of his big undertakings have been successes; those who are competent to judge speak of his masterly handling of the Canadians on the Western front. He it was that initiated the big offensive at Vimy Ridge. When first I knew him he had just joined the 10th Hussars, and was the shy youth who spoke little but thought much, that you see marked with a cross in the group of the 10th Hussars taken about that time, and given to me by one of those in the picture when they were ordered off to Egypt. He served through the Soudan Campaign, including El Teb and Tamai. The dream of most 10th Hussar men is to command the regiment, doubtless it was Julian Byng's dream, and it was realised in 1902.

When we remember his training was as a cavalry man it seems strange to think of him leading forlorn hopes in Tanks, but if strange to us, it must, on reflection, have seemed stranger to the General. He has had a varied experience since 1914. In October of that year he landed in Belgium in command of the 3rd Cavalry Division and was with General Rawlinson's 7th Division in their retreat from Antwerp to Ypres. In May, 1915, he succeeded General

SOME NOTABLE MEN IN THE 10TH HUSSARS

Genl. the Hon. Sir Julian Byng in his youth (second on left standing up). The Hon. Sir Arthur Lawley (first on left sitting on back of chair). The late Lord Air'ie (10th Earl) killed in South Africa (lying on the ground in front). The late Captain Onslow, the gentleman jockey (extreme right sitting down). Others of the group have made history, but of a different order.

GENERAL THE HON. SIR JULIAN BYNG TO-DAY

Allenby in command of the Cavalry Corps. In August of the same year he went to Gallipoli to command the 9th Corps, and remained there until the evacuation. His lucky star has been in the ascendant throughout the war, and I am glad he has come safely home in the flesh and without having been torn to pieces either justly or unjustly.

It is interesting to look at the photograph of him as a youth and as he is now, after having faced the music many times and on different ways. In a letter I received from him a few days ago he said, " It is satisfying to realise that what one has thought of for thirty years has been accomplished, but the price has been very heavy."

General Byng was at Eton, as a great majority of the men mentioned in this book have been. It is remarkable the freemasonry that still holds good between all that have been educated at that college of sportsmen and good manners, rather than of learning. Mr. Shane Leslie in that delightful epigrammatic and cynical book of his, " The End of a Chapter," speaking of Eton says, " The head is not chosen by the votes of the school, but by a governing body. However, as an inclination to democracy he cannot use the birch until it has been presented to him formally by the boys themselves." As this is an old-established custom it sounds more as if democracy was of long standing, rather than an innovation.

Eton, as of old, has played a good part in the Great War: no fewer than thirteen have gained that modest looking little cross " For Valour "; seven hundred and seventy-two were killed in action; two hundred and seventeen died of wounds, and one hundred and thirty-five died from other causes in connection with the war, while no less than one thousand and sixty-eight were wounded or damaged by gas. This shows that out of five thousand one hundred and sixty old Etonians who have taken part in the war one in five at least have made the supreme sacrifice—a terrible percentage. If Eton had no other claim to our affections the splendid comradeship that exists between all who have been there would make it stand head and shoulders above any other educational centre that I know. The way all

General Maude's contemporaries at Eton wrote and spoke of him, when he achieved his series of successes in Mesopotamia, and their real grief when he died was like the pleasure and grief of a most united family ; and I have often noticed when abroad, if old Etonians meet, they foregather at once and help each other as a matter of course.

It is difficult to stop writing of the brave men who have fought, and those who have died, that we might stay safely in our homes, sad and lonely though many now be, and it is hard to leave off writing about my fellow-travellers, the many good friends who have been one of the great happinesses of my life. I owe them a deep debt of gratitude.

There are many wonderful stories still that I could tell, but the time is not yet ; partly because it is too soon, all is too painfully fresh ; partly because other people are involved ; partly—for many reasons. But I must not forget the story of how Norman de Crespigny died, to which I referred earlier in the book.

Lieutenant Claude Norman Champion de Crespigny, Queen's Bays, met his death on September 14th at Néry at the south-west corner of the Forest of Compiègne in the early days of the war when our troops were " up against it."

One of his brother officers in the Queen's Bays, when writing to give the sad news to the lad's father (my kind friend Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny), describes how the Bays were enveloped in a thick fog and were being outflanked by the enemy, which meant the regiment would be wiped out. Quickly grasping the situation, Norman de Crespigny, though already badly wounded, with a bare handful of men, made a sortie on the regiments to the right—the handful and their gallant leader were the ones wiped out, but the regiment was saved—I think and hope that de Crespigny lived long enough to hear that what he had given his life to do had been accomplished. When found, his body was nearest to the German lines. He had received two more mortal wounds from shrapnel and was in agony, but no words, not even a groan, escaped

his lips, and thus he died with splendid courage and dignity.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle gives a graphic account of this battle of Nieuport in his book, " The British Campaign in France and Flanders, 1914," and on pages 127 and 132 he refers to young de Crespigny's bravery.

In his Preface Sir Arthur says, " To record the heroic deeds of a division and yet be compelled to leave out the name of the man who made it so efficient is painful to the feelings of a writer, but the book was written at a time when no mention was allowed of any names other than those of Generals."

General Allenby, writing to the lad's father, said, " No man could have done more, few would have done as much."

It is hard to find any comfort when one's sons have been cut off before they have tasted the joys of life, but it must be some comfort and a matter of pride to Norman de Crespigny's people that through their son's bravery he saved his regiment (The Bays), enabling them to advance dismounted, all their horses having been shot or stampeded, and recover the guns of L Battery, R.H.A.

Norman was buried with sixteen others. Colonel Bradbury, who lost both legs, and Campbell (brother officers), twelve " Bays " and two Germans.

Sir Claude de Crespigny had his son's body exhumed and it received a military funeral, being conveyed on a gun-carriage to the family mausoleum at Maldon. This was in November 14th, 1914, and he lies beside his gallant elder brother who is described in " The V.C." book of D. H. Parry's as having been deprived of his Victoria Cross by " cruel injustice."

I know a good deal about this miscarriage of justice and have seen many of the letters that passed between the authorities. It was only through a mistake that the present Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny's eldest son did not receive this much-coveted reward. I refer to Captain Claude de Crespigny, of the 2nd Life Guards, the only officer in the Household Cavalry who was recommended for

this recognition of his services by his Divisional General and by Lord Roberts.

Colonel Neeld, at that time commanding the Household Cavalry in South Africa, writing to another military authority, the present General Porter, at that time commanding the first Cavalry Brigade in South Africa, says, "My report of de Crespigny (2nd Life Guards) was unfortunately lost and seems never to have reached Sir J. French. During the fighting round Rensburg de Crespigny was in charge of a reconnoitring party. Two men of the advanced guard of this party were fired on and the horse of one of them killed. De Crespigny took a troop horse, his own having been twice wounded under him, and rode to the assistance of the trooper, whose horse had been killed under a heavy fire. This second horse was almost immediately killed, but eventually de Crespigny and the trooper, assisted by another trooper who rode to their aid, reached safety.

If you would write to Sir J. French I shall be very grateful."

These are the bald facts epitomised of much the same calibre as that for which the late Lord William Beresford and others I could name have received the much-valued Victoria Cross.

Upon receipt of Colonel Neeld's letter, General Porter wrote the following to Sir John French:

TREMATON CASTLE,
SALTASH, CORNWALL.

MY DEAR SIR JOHN,

I have received the enclosed correspondence, which speaks for itself.

A strong recommendation was sent in by Neeld at the time and forwarded by me to you. Somehow it appears to have been lost, but how or where after this lapse of time I do not know, but suggest possibly John Vaughan might recollect the circumstances and give some clue . . . possibly a line from you might put the matter right.

CAPTAIN CLAUDE DE CRESPIGNY, 2ND LIFE GUARDS.
RECOMMENDED FOR THE V.C.

Then follows Sir John French's letter written to Sir Claude de Crespigny, from

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
FARNBOROUGH, HANTS.

MY DEAR SIR CLAUDE,

I send you a letter I have from Lord Roberts. I forwarded him the two enclosed recommendations and also a very strong one from myself. Lord Roberts's inference that because I mentioned your son in despatches therefore I had thrown out my wish that he should receive the Cross is not what I intended should be drawn. I'm afraid there is nothing more to be done.

Yours very sincerely,
J. D. P. FRENCH.

Lord Haldane, writing from the War Office later, says that while "undoubtedly de Crespigny performed a most gallant action in the opinion of his expert advisers it was not one within the category for which the Victoria Cross is given. The expert advisers were the four military members of the Army Council, and that therefore the decision of Lord Roberts was quite right."

Considering the despatch was lost that seems a little lame.

In Parry's book, which I have already mentioned, he writes:

"Captain de Crespigny of the 2nd Life Guards, whose gallantry near Rensburg was beyond question. . . . His not receiving the Victoria Cross will always remain a monument of singular injustice.

"His recommendation for the V.C. was lost, and although the facts subsequently substantiated were endorsed by Lord Roberts and Sir John French, the authorities justified their refusal to reopen the question by a most extraordinary reading of the warrant. The case will be found clearly set forth in 'The Army and Navy Gazette' for December, 1911. It is a hard case, unfortunately one of the many that show the curious workings of the official mind."

One dare not hope that all who deserve the Victoria Cross

will get it, the present generation can remember other instances. None of us have forgotten our feelings when Sir Ian Hamilton, then only a young subaltern, was recommended for the V.C. for his superb bravery at Majuba, when he tried many times at the risk of his life to arouse the authorities to a sense of their imminent danger but without success, the result being disaster, which, had his warning been attended to, might have been averted. All who knew anything about it, considered he richly deserved this honour; but he did not receive it. It was much the same with Younghusband, and again with de Crespigny of the Life Guards.

The death of the latter was very sad. He had suffered a good deal from a bullet which hit him in the groin in the action at Poplar Grove, it travelled up his body and was located by the X-ray at the back of his heart, and from another wound when in command of an advance guard in West Africa. On top of this came a bad attack of influenza from which he never recovered.

I think his innumerable falls and accidents while steeplechasing, hunting and at polo had weakened his power of resistance to that deadly malady.

The de Crespignys are born fighters. They are an old Norman family who fought in the First Crusade, and in that under St. Louis, and were champions to the Dukes of Normandy and Brittany. They owned the lands of Fontenay, Fleurière and Crespigny. Claude Champion de Crespigny, Vicomte de Vire, and his wife the Countess de Vierville, quitted the latter place at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He was at that time an officer in the French army and was subsequently given a commission in the British army and fought under Marlborough.

It can be readily understood that no soldier would care to argue about or wish to receive the Victoria Cross if it was not considered his due, and offered to him spontaneously, and that they would deprecate any suggestion that they should receive it. But the relatives of those men have feelings, and it is not surprising that they may try to see justice done to their belongings, though the individual

himself would not raise a finger towards it. Soldiers are very modest men—most of them.

If Kerensky had possessed the will power and courage of the de Crespignys the chaos of Russia might have been averted.

What our men have suffered is only known to a few, for men do not freely speak of these things, the facts can only be gathered by degrees of the awful misery and hopelessness that has been experienced when they were so " up against it " that even praying became impossible, and humour took its place, that oft-time saviour of our sanity.

One of the most human documents I ever read was a prayer found in the pocket of a dead man who was killed in action on October 11th, 1917, at 4.30 p.m., in Flanders. It was sent to me by a friend who had copied it, he tells me.

It is eloquent of the mental and physical sufferings of the writer and those around him.

" Father of all, Helper of the free, we pray with anxious hearts for all who fight on sea or land, and in the air, to guard our homes and liberty.

" Make clear the vision of our leaders and their counsels wise.

" Into Thy care our ships and seamen we commend: guard them from chance-sown mines and all the dangers of this war at sea : make true their aim in mist, or battle smoke, by night or day, and, as of old, give them victory.

" To men on watch, give vigilance ; to those below calm sleep.

" Make strong our soldiers' hearts, and brace their nerves against the bursting shrapnel, and the unseen fire, that lays the next man low.

" In pity blind them from the sight of fallen comrades left upon the field.

" May Christ Himself in Paradise receive the souls of those who pass through death.

" Let not soldiers ever doubt that they shall overcome the forces of that King who seeks to ' wade through slaughter to a throne and shut the gate of mercy on mankind.'

" O God of Love and Pity, have compassion on the wounded, make bearable their pain, or send unconsciousness. To surgeons and to dressers give strength that knows no failing, and skill that suffers not from desperate haste.

" To tired men give time for rest.

" Pity the poor beasts that suffer for men's wrong.

" For us at home, let not that open shame be ours that we forget to ease the sufferings of the near and dear of the brave men in the firing line.

" O Thou who makest human hearts the channel of Thy answers to our prayers, let loose a flood of sympathy and help, for children and their mothers and all who wander desolate and suffering, leaving wrecked homes, and fields, and gardens trodden under ruthless feet.

" With Thee who sufferest more than all, may we in reverence Thy burden share, for all are Thine and in Thine image made, they too are Thine who caused the wrong.

" O Father, may this war be mankind's last appeal to force.

" Grant us from this stricken earth, sown with Thy dead, an everlasting bower of peace shall spring, and all Thy world become a garden, where this flower of Christ shall grow.

" And this we beg for our dear Elder Brother's sake, who gave Himself for those He loved, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

A few days ago when discussing present-day politics and the unsettled state of the labour market I was asked whose word I would rather rely upon, that of a Jew financier or one of our present-day politicians. I replied without hesitation, " The Jew financier." But I will leave the vexed question of politics.

We are all very proud of our men when they have done well, and glad when they are rewarded, but I hope many of us will not be carried off our mental balance to the extent I witnessed the other day on a South-Western platform. A certain wife, whose husband had lately been

decorated with the Victoria Cross, was so full of pride that she had painted in large white letters on her bonnet box—

Mrs. ——, V.C.

At the time I saw this unusual luggage decoration I was on my way to assist at a village concert got up in aid of some of the many requirements of the troops that we fondly imagined our taxes covered. A jovial little squire who lived in the neighbourhood had also promised to assist by singing a rollicking song or two, though his summers numbered seventy. When he was half through the first song and all was going excellently we saw something drop at his feet. There was a moment's pause; he stooped down, picked up the something that had dropped, popped it into his mouth, continuing his warble just where he had left it off as if nothing had occurred. Splendid man. The audience, most of whom had known the squire all their lives, cheered him loudly, for how could he have sung without them? He felt he deserved a drink after his efforts, but these are cold water days and do not appeal to him.

How pleased Sir Wilfrid Lawson would have been if he had lived to see the present-day teetotal drinks. He and Mr. Justice Grantham once had an amusing controversy by correspondence in Cumberland as to the application of the Black List on the Licensing Act. It arose out of Grantham's charge to the Grand Jury when he told them they must not expect that a mere reduction of public-houses would in itself put an end to drunkenness. He then referred to the very early sin as recorded in the Bible as a proof that drunkenness was known long before the introduction of public-houses.

Sir Wilfrid Lawson, the veteran teetotaller, was foreman of the jury, and replied to the learned judge's charge the next day in the following lines:

Sir William, to-day you made mention of Noah,
Who of the old barque took command:
Who, though probably never tipsy before,
Got drunk when he reached dry land.
If you had been there when he left the old barque
Which the floods and the storms had resisted,
I believe that the instant he came from the Ark
You'd have had him Black Listed.

The following came from the judge's lodgings in Carlisle:

Dear Sir Wilfrid, I think you are hard
On Noah, that poor old sinner,
Because on first landing for once he took
A drop too much for his dinner.
Remember the life he had led
Cooped up in that tiny Ark
While it rained cats and dogs from morning to night
And deluged his ugly old barque.

But I am sure as a county " beak,"
A " beak " of rare good sense,
Will look at least with a lenient eye
On a criminal's first offence.

I feel it would be most ungrateful of me to lay down my pen without having mentioned or expressed any gratitude to my feathered friends who have been my constant companions through all the varying scenes of my life—the dear little birds that accompany us on our journeys sharing our gladness and our sadness, like the poor always with us, and like us unconscious instruments carrying out in fulfilment some vast design of which they know as little as the gnat or mosquito that they eat, and like us pawns in a game that is being played with us, as with the sun and stars in the heavens.

Birds have their religion just as we have ours, the only difference between their faith and ours lies in the trimming. The swallows are perhaps the most religious, they collect on the church tower for their evensong and choir practices, and gather up there for one last big festival before that strange force hereditary instinct makes them leave our shores to face great perils by night and day.

Maybe it is the beautiful air in which they live that makes them such calm, contented philosophers, or maybe they have heard the whisper that has not reached us yet. Birds have comparatively few conflicts within themselves. Instinct makes roads before they are seen instead of seeing them before they are made.

We set great store on ourselves, our much-vaunted superiority, but how do we know the predominance we have

chosen for ourselves is of any more importance than the system that rules the birds and the trees? Nature thinks no more of us, respects us no more, than she does the fussy blue-bottle or the busy bee, indeed less, for we are self-conscious and articulate, anticipating our sorrows and destruction.

The swallows have travelled far with me in foreign lands and been nearest to me in my own, for they have built their nests close to my windows and within my doors. What would summer be to us without them? It would hardly be summer at all. Why do they ever leave us when they are so welcome? Have they, I wonder, any ornithological Bradshaw telling them when and where to go?

It is fascinating to contemplate the great interest which has carried them in their annual flight across uncharted seas since the hills were young, for migration is of great antiquity. Jeremiah, with his tenderness and beauty of sentiment, refers to the migration of the swallows, while in the Vatican there are documents dating back to 588 B.C. referring to the same subject.

The Persians and Arabs count on their calendars from the disappearance and reappearance of the migratory birds. These little bodies and big hearts do not migrate for pleasure any more than we come into this world for pleasure and to please ourselves. They are hurrying on in hopes of warmth and comfort, just as we are hurrying on in hopes of leaving chaos for cosmos, with little more, indeed perhaps not so much, knowledge of why we do it or what will be the end.

Birds have a wonderful knowledge of topography owing to the height at which they fly. When the valleys are wrapped in gloom and darkness they naturally seek the tops of the hills and mountains still kissed by the reflected light of the setting sun, just as we when wishing to find our way in a strange country climb the nearest hill or tree to find our bearings.

All who love these fellow-travellers, whether swallows or other migrant birds, must be interested in their cries as they pass us on their way to other shores in the silent night.

Some keep up an incessant cry, others are quite silent. Larks call perpetually, and the moment they reach earth sing loud and long—a thanksgiving I sometimes think.

There is a good deal of method in the way birds arrange their lives. Those that are sickly or in any way injured are the first to leave us, evidently thinking they will take longer on the journey, and prefer to travel when there is no crowd. One of the strangest parts of their methods is the way the young birds who have never before left the home of their birth will start off alone without parents or companion to show them or tell them where to go, and all birds start away on the darkest nights.

The tragedy of it is that so many perish every year and come back to us no more. Pathetic sights may be seen around a lighthouse during the migrating season, when numbers of tired, hungry little bodies fly towards the light, knowing that where man is they will find food and resting place, ending too often in their own light being put out for ever by dashing themselves to pieces against the glass, dazzled by the light.

One of the most beautiful things in life is the way birds meet death : so different from the unreasonable fear many human beings experience. Birds have no dread, just a peaceful sleeping away. Take for example the round-eyed, inquisitive robin that has been all activity and life. He does not feel well, is not hungry, so sits on a branch or a railing and ruffles out his feathers. After a while, feeling no better, he makes his way into a holly bush or some deep shadow where he hops on to a branch, generally rather low down, ruffles out his feathers still more, lifts one leg and tucks it up, puts his head under his wing and sleeps away, no crowd about his death-bed, no psalm singing, only a great faith, bowing to the inevitable in perfect silence, peace and dignity.

They have no fear because to-morrow may wear a different face.

We are all links in one great chain, all parts of some vast design. It is some of the smallest links that hold the big

ones together. Who can say some of the smaller ones—our birds, our dogs and dumb companions—have not fulfilled their part by giving us pleasure and courage, and cheering some of our darkest hours? Though we cannot now understand what they say to us, I should not like to say we never shall.

THE END.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BRENDON AND SON, LTD.
PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND

INDEX

A

Abdul Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan, 68, 71, 85
Afghan Boundary Commission, the, 66, 69, 70, 73–103
Afghan War, 1878–80, 70
Afghanistan, late Amir of, 67–69
Agadir, 16
Ahmed Bey, 43
" Akhal Jekkes," the, 71
Alikhanoff, 78, 79, 82
Allenby, General, 19, 289, 291
Amara, 42
Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 177–179
Asquith, Mr. H., 212, 215
Asquith, Mrs., 140
Aylmer, General, 14

B

Badakshan, 72
Baghdad, 16, 30, 32, 37, 41–43, 47, 53
Baghdad Railway, the, 42, 45
Balfour, Mr. A. J., 13, 103, 104, 177, 179
Baratoff, General, 43
Barringtown, Lady, 266–272
Barura Peninsula, the, 45
Basra, 13, 14, 24, 39, 42
" Bays," the, 290, 291
Beled Station, 44
Beresford, the late Lord William, 292
Bertie, Lord, 13
Bewicke-Copley, General, 287
Bokhara, 67, 71, 98
" Buffs," the, 46, 47, 51
Bülow, Count von, 177
Burbidge, late Sir Richard, 287
Byng, Sir Julian, 35, 287–289

C

Cairo, 69
" Cambrian News," the, 210
Campbell, Sir W. Pitcairn, 19
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H., 212
Candler, Edmund, 31
Cardewe, Capt., 266–272
Cardewe, Mrs., 268–271
Carlton, Miss Billie, 180
Carter, Major, R.A.M.C., 39
Castlereagh, Lady. *See* Lady Londonderry
Catherine II, 126
Cato, Colonel, 216–237
Cato, Mrs., 216–237
Centanini, Count, 132, 134
Chamberlain, Mr. Joseph, 177, 179
Chirriaieff, Mme, 139
Clarke, Sir Edward, 211
Connaught, Duke of, 52
Constantinople, 9, 10
Cooper, General, 17
Cork, Lord, 178
Cornish, F. W., Housemaster at Eton, 4
Cossacks, the, 92–94
Crespigny, Sir Claude de, 18, 19, 290–294
Crespigny, Capt. Claude de, 291–294
Crespigny, Lieut Norman de, 19, 290, 291
Cromer, Lord, 179
Ctesiphon, 24, 38, 40

D

Dahra Bend, the, 37
" Daily News," the, 211
" Daphne," 56–66
Dardanelles, the, 26, 55, 288
Dardanelles Campaign, the, 8–10
Davies, General Sir Francis, 7, 35
Dawson, General Vesey, 35, 36
Deli Abbas, 43
Demeliovitch, Grand Duke, 145
Dennis, Dora, 238–256
Dennis, Rev. Edward, 239–255

Derby, Earl of, 13
Devonshire, Duke of, 177
Dolgorouki, the late Prince Alexis, 112
Doyle, Sir A. Conan, 291
Drummond, General Lawrence, 5
Duff, Sir Beauchamp, 17–19
Dujail Canal, the, 45
Dunster, 173–175
Durand, Sir Edward, 73, 78

E

Eckhardstein, Baron von, 176–180
Edward VII, 176–178, 213
Egypt, 67–69
Elisabeth, late Empress of Austria, 176
Enver Pasha, 26, 69
Eton, 289, 290
Euphrates, the, 15, 28, 42, 43

F

Fairfax, Mr., 218–221, 227–236
Falahiyah, 21
Fermoy, late Lord, 182
Finch, Capt., 272–280
Finch, Mrs., 272–280
Firman, Lieut., 25
Follett, Col. William, 35
Forbes, Capt., 30
French, Field Marshal Lord, 19, 292, 293

G

Gallipoli, 8–12, 26, 289
George V, 6, 51, 70, 286
George, David Lloyd, Prime Minister—
  appreciation of, 211
  as Chancellor of the Exchequer, 212, 213
  his designs upon the House of Lords, 213
  characteristics of, 206, 208, 209
  his defects, 215
  early training of, 206
  at the Front, 282 ...
  his Government saved by the action of Sir W. Robertson, 13
  gratitude of, 210
  and Lord Northcliffe, 215
  repartees of, 209, 210
  as solicitor, 207
  warlike attitude of, 205
Germany,
  influence in Russia, 118–121
  interest in Persia, 69
  intrigues in Afghanistan, 68
  monopolises Russian trade, 121, 158
  propaganda in India, 67
Gibson, Sir John, 210
Gok Tapa, 71
Gorringe, Sir G. F., 27
Grantham, Mr. Justice, 297, 298
Grey, Lady Sybil, 162
Guersberg, Bara de, 139
Gully Beach, 9, 55
Gulran, 79, 81, 83, 86, 89

H

Hai Salient, the, 37
Haig, Field-Marshal Sir Douglas, 12, 16
Haldane, Lord, 293
Hamilton, General Sir Ian, 11, 12, 54, 55, 294
Hannah Position, the, 21, 22
Harbe, 44
Hasheen and Tamai, Battle of, 5
Hawtrey's Preparatory School, 4, 36
Hayashi, Count, 179, 180, 215
Hayman, Mrs., 192–196
"Helen," 131–152
Hellas, Cape, 8
Helmund River, the, 73, 76, 77, 86
Heltzendorff, Count Ernest von, 180, 181
Herat, 66, 67, 70, 72, 88
Hesse, Grand Duke of, 166
Hindu Kush, the, 99
Hochberg, Count von, 173–176, 180–182
Holditch, Sir Thomas, 75
Howard Dr., 245–248, 255, 256

J

John, the late Prince, 213
"Julnar," the, 25

K

Kabul, 66, 68, 99, 100
Kandahar, 66, 70
Karun, 28

Kavanagh, D.S.O., General, 435
Kazi-Saad-ud-din, 76
Kerensky, 295
Khadaire Bend, the, 37
Khalil Pasha, 25
Khiva, 71
Kinsky, Prince, 176
Kitchener, Earl, 11, 15, 18, 43, 69, 288
Kizil Robat, 43
Kohsan, 77, 78
Ksheriska, Russian ballet dancer, 142
Kuhlberg, Colonel, 89, 91, 199
Kut, 13, 43
Kut, first battle of, 40
Kyasht, Mme Lydia, 130, 139, 141

L

Labouchere, Mr., 215
Lake, Sir Percy, 17, 27
Lambton, D.S.O., Gen. the Hon., 4, 36
Lansdowne, Lord, 177, 179
Laventie, 7
Lawrence, Gen. Sir Herbert, 55
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, 297, 298
Leslie, Mr. Shane, 289
Lessar, M., 89, 91, 99
Leverhulme, Lord, 287
Levita, General, 4
Lipkowska, Lydia, 139
Lloyd, Sir Francis, 19
Londonderry, late Marquess of, 103, 104, 108
Londonderry, Theresa, late Marchioness of, 104–108
Loos, 10–12
Lumsden, Sir Peter, 65, 75, 78–81, 83, 86, 87, 102
Lung Ching, 181
Lutzk, 148, 153

M

Marshall, Gen. Sir W. K., 33, 38
Maruchak, 89–91
Mary, Queen, 213, 285
Maude, General Sir Stanley—
  appreciations of, 12, 13, 22, 23, 35, 36, 54, 55, 290
  career of, 5, 6
  characteristics of, 4, 6, 28, 31, 37, 38, 40, 41, 48, 49, 51, 52
  as Commander-in-Chief in Mesopotamia, 27–40
Maude, General Sir Stanley (*cont.*)—
  commands 13th Division in Mesopotamia, 21, 22
  death of, 40, 41
  despatches of, 37, 43–47
  as disciplinarian, 32, 33
  early life of, 4, 5
  in Egypt, 13
  in France, 7, 8
  at Gallipoli, 8–13
  health of, 31, 32
  letters from, 50, 51
  marriage of, 5, 6
  memorial service to, 51–53
  as sportsman, 4, 49
  suggested memorial to, 42, 43
  training New Army, 7
  his transport difficulties in Mesopotamia, 13–17
  his views on Gallipoli evacuation, 10, 11, 55
  working day of, 28–30
Maude, Lady, 52
Maude, V.C., General Sir F. F., father of Sir Stanley Maude, 5, 51
Merv, 67, 71, 101
Metchnikoff, Elias, 159
Methuen, Lady, 284
Methuen, Lord, 36, 283, 284, 286, 287
Meyendorff, Baron von, 166
Michailvosk, port of, 71
Middlethorpe, Miss, 200–204
Minehead, 173–175
Minto, Lady, 5
Minto, Lord, Governor-General of Canada, 5, 6
Mohammerah, 42
Money, General, 17, 28, 29, 34
Monro, Sir Charles, 27
Monte Carlo, 167–171
Mordkin, M., 132, 133, 136
Mudros, 8
Munie, Ayah, 56
Murghab River, the, 78, 81, 89, 91

N

Nahr Khalis Canal, 44
Nastia, maid to Mme Pavlova, 134, 135
Neeld, Colonel, 292
Néry, 290
Netheravon, 172
Nicholas, Grand Duke, 116
Nieuport, Battle of, 291

Nixon, General Sir John, 16, 39
Nojinsky, M., 144
Northcliffe, Lord, 215, 282
Nushki, 73

O

Old Age Pensions Act, 210
Oranburg Railway, the, 67
Oxus River, the, 66, 67, 97–9

P

Paget, Lady Muriel, 145, 151, 162, 163
Pamirs, the, 71
Panjdeh, 67, 78–81, 83–85, 88–91
Paravicini, Mr. de, 35
Parry, D. H., 291
Patricia, Princess, 213
Pavlova, Mme, 130–140
Peel, Sir Robert, 209
Persia, 69, 71, 77
Peshawar, 66, 100
Peter the Great, 120–126
Petrograd, 120–123
Pless, Prince Henry XV of, 176, 182
Porter, General, 292
Pultenay, General, 7

Q

Quetta, 66, 75, 77, 88

R

Ramadie, 43
Ramsay, Commander, 213
Rasputin, 117–120
"Repent-at-Leisure," Lord and Lady, 183–198
Rensburg, 292, 293
Ridgeway, Sir West—
  early life of, 102, 103
  in charge of Afghan Boundary Commission, 66, 75, 87–101
  his knowledge of Afghanistan, 102
  at Panjdeh, 80, 81
Ridgeway, Lady, 103, 104
Ripon, Lord, 85
Roberts, Earl, 15, 43, 102, 292, 293
Robertson, Sir Wm., 11, 12, 36, 52
Rogosin, Capt., 141
Rosebery, Earl of, 179
Royal, the Princess, 213
Russia—
  bathing customs in, 112, 113
Russia (*cont.*)—
  corruption in, 143
  domestic habits in, 113, 114
  discontent in, 118, 119
  experiences in, during Revolution, 161–166
  German influence in, 118–121, 158
  religious observances in, 114–116
Russo-Japanese War, 166

S

St. Asaph, Bishop of, 209
Salisbury, Marquess of, 177
Salonika, 12
Samara, 37, 42, 45, 46
Samarcand, 67
Sannaiyat Position, the, 23, 24, 27, 37
Sariks, the, 80, 82, 91, 101
Seaham Harbour, 109, 110
Selborne, Lord, 214
Shatt El Adhaim, 45
Shalt-al-Hai, 37
Shaw, General, 51
Sheikh Said, 27
Shura, maid to Mme Pavlova, 134, 135
Sistan, 77
Skinner, Mr. Cameron, 36
Skobeloff, General, 71, 72
Sladen, Mr. Arthur, 5
South African War, 5, 292, 293
Steel, Mr. Theodore, 132
Stewart, Sir Donald, 73, 75
Stopford, General, 36
Streatfield, Colonel Sir Henry, 52
Suwaikieh Marsh, the, 21
Suvla, 8

T

Taylor, Colonel, 6
Termez, 67
Tigris, the, 14, 15, 19, 23–27, 33, 42–46
Townshend, General, 24–26
Trans-Caspian Railway, the, 66, 67
Tsar Nicholas II, the late, 69, 119, 142, 143
Tsarevitch, Alexis, the late, 116–118
Tsaritza, the late, 119, 145

V

Vaughan, E. L., 51
Vaughan, John, 292

Victoria, Queen, 100, 110
Vimy Ridge, 288

W

Weigall, Capt., 179
William, II, ex-German Emperor, 177, 178
William, ex-German Crown Prince, 175, 176, 180, 181
Wilson, Sir H., 13
Wilson, President, 68
Wrey, Sir Bourchier, 19

Y

Yarkland, 71
Yates, M.P., Colonel, 81–83
Younghusband, General Sir George, 21–24
Yousupoff, Prince Felix, 119, 120

Z

Zulfikar, 89, 90
Zulu War, the, 62

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